

# THE Tatler

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CHRISTMAS  
NUMBER



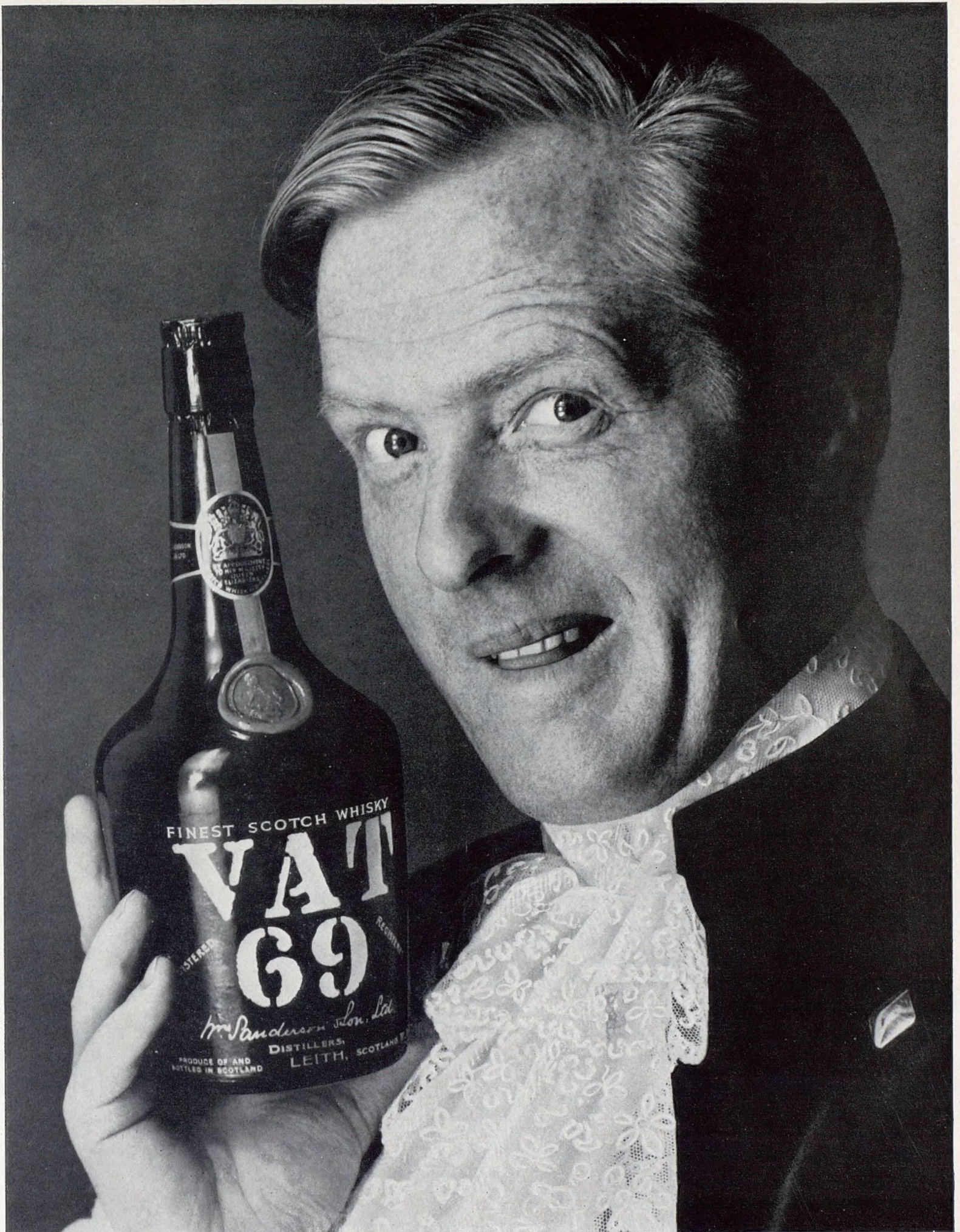




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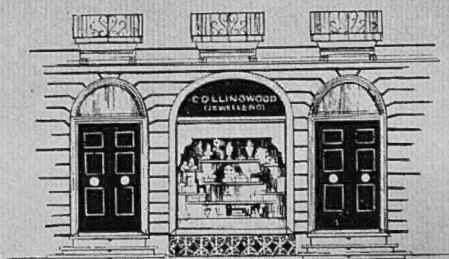


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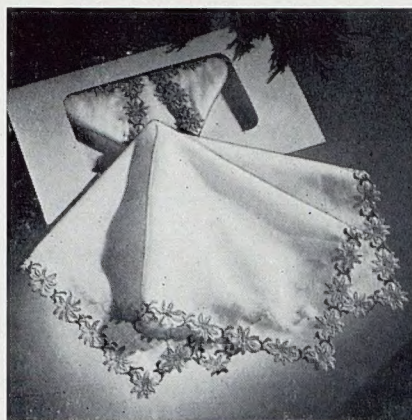
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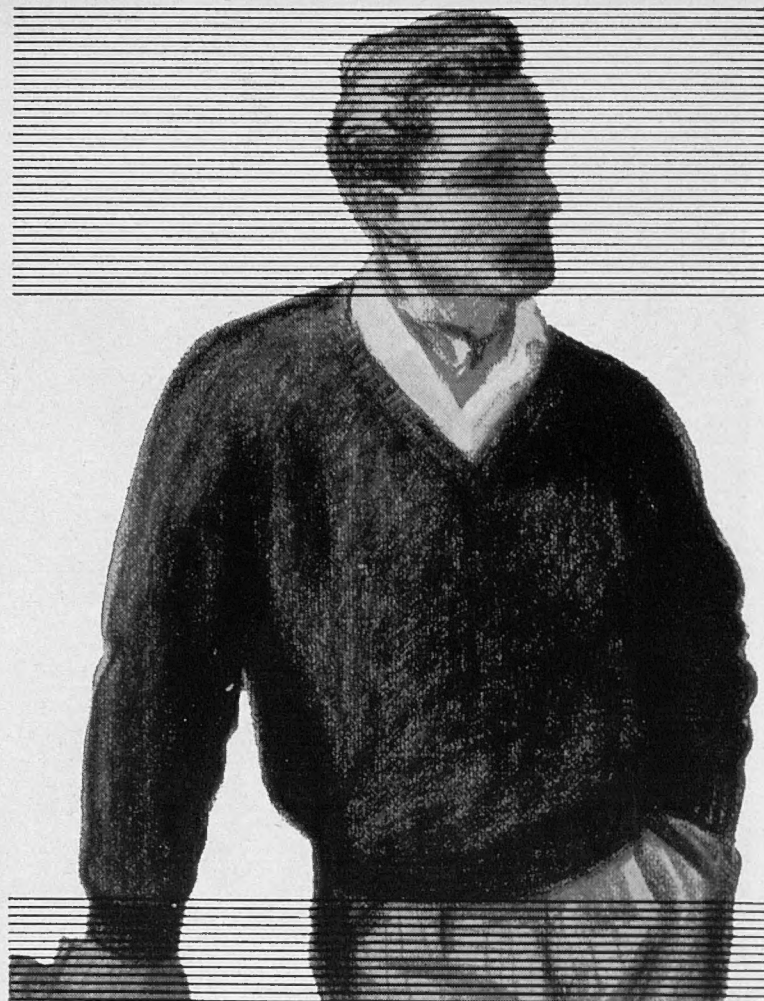


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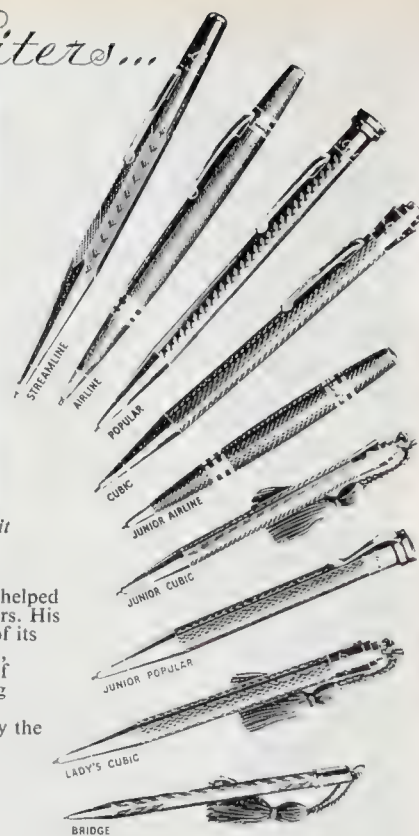
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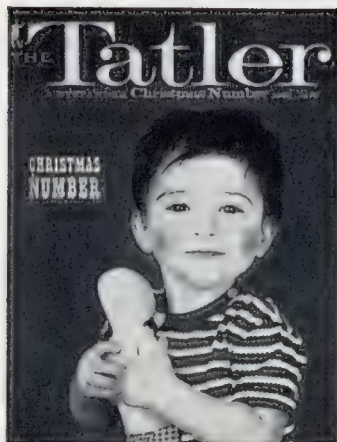
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THE TATLER  
9 NOVEMBER 1962

# CHRISTMAS NUMBER



Think of Christmas—think of children. It's a festival that belongs to them since Christmas began with the birth of a Child. Hence the theme of this year's Christmas Tatler with its pictures, features and pages of colour. To the children and their parents who'll read it in all parts of the world go the Tatler's sincerest wishes for a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year



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# British children—do they get a square deal?

WE HAVE COME, VERY RIGHTLY, TO ACCEPT A great many improvements in the lot of children as the only reasonable way to behave towards them. At one end of the scale, they no longer work in the pits, nor clamber up chimneys, nor suffer at Dotheboys Hall; at the other, they are not tricked out in swords and tricorne like tiny miniature gentlemen. There are still not enough playgrounds, playing fields and new school buildings to go round, and the big division—perhaps, if you like, the biggest unsolved problem in our postwar society—falls between the child on state education and the child at a major fee-paying public school. I'm not out to solve this one in the space of a short article, but to inquire into what are perhaps the frivolities of childhood; what they do on wet days, what they wear, how much they care about infant self-expression through the creation of a felt tiger and whether anyone actually minds if they learn the *Twist* before the age of six, which is in my opinion the optimum age for it anyway.

To start with, let us cast a wary eye at the Latins. Reluctant ever to let their children go to bed, chary of letting the wind of heaven visit their cheeks too roughly, they wheel their astoundingly precious young about like teeny mummies, stiff and motionless inside white prams hung about with family portraits and festooned with muslin to keep off evil vapours. The children look deadly pale, nobody cares a button for their physical education, they start school work as dawn breaks and are still labouring on after late dinner, their legs grow long like sad sticks of celery and are frequently decorated with too-short shorts or dreadful little bottom-freezing frilly skirts. Their shoes are all too often a model of their mother's in natty white kid and no one has got around to introducing the magnificent last-a-lifetime English type of deadly child's shoe with toe and sole made of iron, the resistance of a

labourer's boot and the moral fibre of the best type of English reformer.

Yet the late-to-bed Latins adore their children in a manner most English privately regard as obscurely *wrong*, taking constant bites out of them as though they were peaches, weeping and roaring over them, fighting too passionately and publicly for them, boasting openly about them, feeding them far too much ice-cream and allowing them to stay up all night to watch the television. I am not intending to take sides in this nasty business; it just seemed worth pointing out that there were sides to take.

English children are often a great deal easier to get on with than little Latins—being more patient, forbearing, selfless and less inclined to shriek if crossed—but they are also a good deal less pretty. I realize there exists a fine English ideal of childhood, consisting of slim straight legs, slim straight back, slim straight hair (burnished gold) and slim straight gaze (the distant blue of the horizon on a misty summer morning). All very pleasant too, but reality all too often means spectacles, an overall look of pale beigeness and acute lack of sunshine, a tendency to overgrow, and an ability to make any garment look ill-fitting. English children being in my opinion among the nicest and the plainest in the world, it stands to reason that something should be done with clothes to disguise their unluckiness, especially now that a sound postwar diet is producing a race of young near-giants.

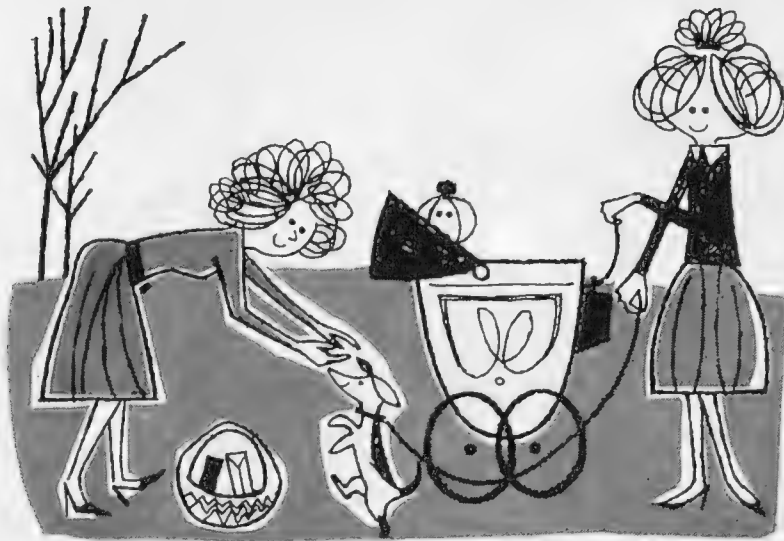
I feel fairly strongly that girls in particular are not specially helped by what they are compelled in England to wear. The chain stores are more enlightened, but all too often what the posher children's shops think suitable for a small girl is something mysteriously, monstrously, inexplicably combining puff sleeves, smocking, collar and cuffs, buttons down the chest, sash, here and there a frill or two and a fabric in richly patterned ox-blood.

("But would you wear anything like that?" I remember asking an assistant, as we stood in an appalled trance together in front of a crammed rail. "No," she said, turning deadly pale at the thought, "But you'd be amazed, they sell.")

Larger girls—and the age girls now grow large is very early indeed—in school uniform (and on principle I am very much in favour of school uniform) are miserably inclined to look like parcels carelessly tied round the middle. There is an ever-present tendency in the English schoolgirl to look like a dismal conglomeration of lumps badly strung together; few uniforms I have seen do much to counteract this. And English boys I feel run some risk of suffering spiritual depression by having to wear ties from the age of two or thereabouts, swiftly followed by regulation accessories including sock-suspenders and snake-fastening belt. The Bluecoat boys look extraordinarily handsome but then they wear fancy dress from an age which hadn't got around to collars and ties and liked belts to be big, leather, and fastened with a respectable buckle.

I think we fret too much about children at present, conditioned by guilt-producing (as well as sane, liberal and high-principled) mass-selling baby-books, by too much are-you-a-well-adjusted-mother journalism, and by the cumulative results of teaching ideals and methods that were once progressive and are now so accepted as to be faintly square. We are all of us clear-eyed permissive (up to a point, there's nothing *beaten* about us, we're still in control) Spock parents, we know that what matters is that a child should express the creative urge within him in bold splodges of poster paint and feel like a confident active member of his own community. The odd eccentric here and there, the dedicated infant scientist who cares little for embroidering oven-gloves or decorating slabs of clay in assorted sizes, the occasional





DRAWINGS BY GORDON BURRELL

## Siriol Hugh-Jones, mother of a seven-year-old daughter, takes a clear-eyed look at the evidence

solitary who is from time to time fully satisfied with his own company, occasions, I think, more anxiety than is perhaps justified.

English children, like children everywhere else, seem to me to live under more or less constant pressure of large numbers of other people, to such an extent that it is now becoming noticeably difficult for them to get away to some retreat on their own. The appalling advance of the mouse-size open-plan house has a great deal to contribute to this, and my generation may well be the last to remember houses with dark passages, attics with naked plaster between the beams and trunks full of other people's letters and discarded odd boots, and spare rooms with no other purpose than to be used for playing in on rainy days. Some such houses, for sure, still exist—the sort of house that E. Nesbit children always lived in for summer holidays, a little threadbare and decrepit, but usefully near to the sandpit. We all of us have some ideal of family life, and for many people this now appears to approximate to an E. Nesbit dream of Edwardian domesticity, with slightly worn flowered nursery wallpaper, four or more children in the family, and a strong tendency to put the girls into frilled pinafores and black stockings—nowadays it's tights. I have a passion for Nesbit myself, for the marvellous climate of calm, factual normality and realism, the smell of furniture polish, paraffin and bread and butter, and most of all for the tangible presence of cook and parlour-maid. Cook became queen of a savage island in *The Phoenix & the Carpet* and was never seen again, and the washing-up-machine and Mixmaster owners have been missing her passionately ever since. Indeed, one of the most gallant sights of 1962 middle-class society is the struggle so nobly waged by many a Nesbit-obsessed mother against a tide of too many Nesbit children in a Nesbit-sized house without benefit of Nesbit

servants. I don't think the children necessarily suffer all that much, but they see rather less of mother than was the original intention in the manuals of child-care, nor have they the deep bread-&-dripping comfort and curiously soothing contact with a below-stairs whose inhabitants were once the closest friends and advisers of the children of the house.

What is splendid about English children is that by and large they manage to survive the rigours of child-birth and infancy (one of the reasons for the carnivorous love of children exhibited by Latins is, I think, the appallingly high incidence of early death to which they have been accustomed for centuries, and every church in England older than 100 years records awful evidence of death before the age of five); they get enough to eat, they are all more or less literate, and since they are generally fly enough to acquire the Englishman's heritage—a deep and Oriental inscrutability—at a very early age, they very often manage to avoid anything deeper than a purely routine raking-over at the hands of their meddling elders, owners and keepers. On the whole, I think they manage pretty well.

The English middle-class child-ideal has, I suppose, not changed very much over the last 30 years. It wears good tweeds with a tendency to run to velvet collars, its socks are white and never folded over at the ankle, its shorts stop—and even then unwillingly—at the knee and every single thing it owns is marked with a Cash's name-tape. It loves its mother and its pony, puts up gamely with whatever sort of boarding-school fate drops in its way, becomes a reliable prefect and very often gets stuck there forever. The middle-classes like children to be clean, wholesome, honourable and slightly simple-minded; to be strong on team-spirit, cheer for the House, keep a straight bat and pass O-level or Common entrance but never exhibit too

open a tendency to what was called, and to my joy still is, braininess. We have a strong urge for children to enjoy the rain and bracing winds at Frinton in the company of a fairly exacting nanny who has enjoyed bossing some of the best-born mothers in England. We like clean hands before meals and a good deal of nice ballet dancing, and we deprecate the spooning of blackcurrant purée down one's neighbour's breast at mealtimes. We like a good child's breast to be neatly smocked and make a noise of jingling bit and bridle when gently rattled.

In fact, we have improved no end. We no longer demonstrate the insane Victorian passion for authoritarian behaviour towards our children, no longer demand unquestioning respect, awe, fear even, simply because we are older and should therefore be wiser. Children are no longer taught to read and play from manuals of fearful moral instruction, no longer made aware at every turn of mortality, guilt, and the load of sin that weighed down a Victorian five-year-old. A child no longer wears a mountain of garments all more or less scratchy, constricting, done up with ungetatable buttons and far from easy to keep clean.

Childhood is no longer regarded exclusively as a long penal training for the blessed release of adulthood. Oddly, the pleasanter we attempt to make the years of childhood, the more eager the young are to grow free of them—though why we are now so acutely anxious about earlier adolescence is odd when you remember that the Elizabethans went to university at 15 and were frequently dead at 40.

I think we're puzzling it out pretty well, one way and another. Maybe the day will soon come when parents and children may agree to accept each other as people who simply exist, not as social problems. It's a new and fairly daring idea, but I think it has possibilities.



# The Cloistered Christmas



PHOTOGRAPHS: ERICH AUERBACH

*Sir William McKie, organist at Westminster Abbey and master of the choristers, listens to a play-back during a recording session. Behind him, the men of the choir—called lay vicars—are Mr. F. McArde, Mr. T. M. Gambold and Mr. W. H. Brown. With him is Mr. Otto Wohler, production manager for Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft, for whom the choir was recording*



While most boys would take a dim view of Christmas on duty the 36 pupils at Westminster Abbey Choir School face the prospect with some pleasure. For the congregations that attend services at the Abbey over the 12 days of Christmas the choral contribution is essential, but this doesn't mean that the boys are retained in Dickensian seclusion with no exeat to stray beyond the confines of Dean's Yard. Christmas for the boys is as much a holiday as the schedule of services allows. There are parties, special treats and trips to pantomimes. Some of the boys in fact prefer to spend Christmas this way and in any case they all go home on 7 January.

The only qualification needed to secure entry to the Abbey school is a good singing voice. Yearly auditions are held and fees carefully scaled so that no potentially valuable chorister need be denied the opportunity of entrance. Of the 36 boys at the school, 24 sing regularly in the choir. The younger ones—entrance dates from the age of eight—are known as probationers. The school, under headmaster Mr. E. W. Thompson,

also provides a full educational schedule that takes the boys up to public school entrance level. Towards the middle of the year the choir becomes somewhat depleted as the older boys' voices break. Exhibitions and scholarships are open to boys of leaving age. Sir William McKie, the Abbey organist and master of the choristers, maintains a high standard. So high that major recording companies demand the services of the Abbey choir for important performances of sacred music. The photographs on these pages were taken during such a session for Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft.

It is arguable that the Abbey choirboys have more demands on them than their counterparts at ordinary schools; music is as important as study. Training, rehearsing, and performing take time. The men in the choir—called "lay vicars"—are professional singers under permanent contract to the Abbey, and the names of the two houses in the school are constant reminders that two great English composers have been associated with it—Purcell and Blow.



*Hodie Christus natus est*—but the boys of Westminster Abbey choir have to work over Christmas. With seasonal choral services the children don't get home until early January. This is one penalty to balance against the privilege of being accepted as a pupil of one of the foremost church choirs in the country





# THE PARTY PLANNERS

Report by Angela Ince, photographs by David Sim



Victoria Scott-Brown is four years old, and has definite and briskly worded views on what makes a good party. Her parents (her father is Simon Scott-Brown, the interior designer) give one for her every Christmas; they do the organizing, but Victoria keeps a crisp eye on the guest list. "She prefers to ask older boys, who she can look up to, or younger girls, who she can boss about," says her mother. Victoria's list of essential guests includes "Grannie, because she laughs and makes everyone else laugh." Another is the family dog, Rusty, who is the kind of large, polite animal that doesn't mind being walked over and sat on, and glooms if he's left out of any excitement. Most guests are aged between two and six, and are entertained in the dining room "largely because there's plenty of room and a black and white washable floor, and once we have taken the velvet chairs out, there's nothing much they can damage."

## THE ATMOSPHERE

Invitations read from 3.30 to 6, and Victoria insists on choosing the cards, which must have a picture of her favourite animal on them—currently, a rabbit—and she likes to be kept up-to-date on who's accepted. Her idea of a really swinging party seems to be lots of noise and masses of food, but she does pay a lot of attention to what she's going to wear. "We don't put her into frilly party dresses—they don't suit her, and children can't really enjoy themselves in fragile clothes. The best thing seems to be a short smock, with tights and a matching jersey underneath—it keeps her warm, and looks pretty."

## SERVICE

Mrs. Scott-Brown does most of the preparatory work for the party, but buys the cake, a delectable one with masses of real grated chocolate all over

it, from Fortnum & Mason. At the party itself, most of the guests bring their own nannie or au pair girl, who keep an eye on table manners and help to pass round.

## CELLAR

"Either orange squash, or chocolate milk, made from ice-cold milk and instant chocolate powder."

## GUESTS' GUIDE

(What is expected from them in the way of conversation.) "Victoria expects her guests to join in and enjoy themselves, and actually she is very good at organizing the shyer ones, and seeing that everything's ticking over. Shy children bring out the best in her."

## VITAL KITCHEN GADGET

"A fridge for taking ice-cream and iced milk out of."

## SPECIALITY OF THE HOUSE

Strawberry whip:  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. cream cheese (must be Scottish—available at Harrods);  $\frac{1}{4}$  pint double cream;  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. strawberries;  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of milk; 4 tablespoons of sugar;  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoonful vanilla essence.

Keep a few strawberries aside for decoration. Cut the rest in slices, sprinkle with half the sugar and a few drops of lemon juice, and put in the fridge for at least an hour. Whip the cream cheese, cream and the rest of the sugar until stiff. Add the milk slowly—the mixture must still be stiff—and the vanilla, and stir. Strain the strawberries, add some of the juice to the mixture, and re-whip. Add the strawberries and put in a bowl. Decorate with the whole strawberries, and pour over them the rest of the juice.













# VICKY'S FIRST BALL

*A usurped throne, a threatened dynasty and some undignified jockeying in the corridors of power were all forgotten when the young Victoria danced at a ball in honour of the child Queen of Portugal. Caryl Brahms, who here re-creates that epochal night at Buckingham Palace, in the august, if dyspeptic, presence of "Uncle King," takes a further peep behind the scenes of Portuguese royalty in her new satirical novel No Castanets to be published next spring*

ON THE EVENING OF 27 May, 1829, two little girls were looking forward to the marvels of a children's ball. In Kensington Palace sat plain, plump little Drina (the future Queen Victoria), safe among familiar faces, places and possessions, secure in the love and care of her dear Mamma and her governess, dear, dear Lehzen, idolized by her nurses and her mother's ladies. It was her first ball, due to take place this time tomorrow at Buckingham Palace in the august if profusely sweating presence of "Uncle King." She had been nine years old for four days now, and she was wondering which of the good but simple party dresses in her wardrobe she would be allowed to wear.

The other child was thinking of this time tomorrow with more mixed feelings. She was little Maria da Gloria, the Queen of Portugal, and the ball was being given in her honour. It was a heavy responsibility. Maria da Gloria was nine years old, too—a few weeks older than the future Queen of England—but she had no mother and indeed no fixed home as she stood on tiptoe before the cupboard in which her jewelled gowns of ceremony were hanging. Maria da Gloria had been staying for some weeks now in a country cottage at Laleham. Dom Felisberto Caldeira Brant Pontes, Marquis of Barbacena, had brought her from Brazil to England where he was bent on collecting a faction to regain the crown of Portugal from her uncle and fiancé, Dom Miguel

of Braganza, who had also been her Regent until a few weeks ago when he had grabbed the crown—an action which put an end to the unnatural "engagement" with some finality. At the same time the foppish and dissolute old Marquis was seeking a bride for that gay widower Maria da Gloria's father, Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, from among the princesses of Europe.

So the Princess be pretty and alluring the balance of power in Europe might go hang was the Emperor of Brazil's understandable attitude. But so far there had been no rush of royal ladies, pretty or otherwise, to be his Empress, and no doubt the constant presence of the Emperor's close companion, the Marqueza da Santos, mother of Maria da Gloria's half-sister, Maria Izabel, the black sheep of her distant nursery, had much to do with this reluctance.

Though the ball was to be held in her honour, the little Queen of Portugal had been kept hanging around in London at the Hotel Crillon week after week without being granted an audience by "Sir, my brother and cousin" as his "good sister and cousin" addressed King George IV. There she had been established in encrusted grandeur waiting on His Majesty's pleasure, while her store of money flowed through the Marquis of Barbacena's lavish fingers. "Dona Maria da Gloria's table alone costs £96 per day," he wrote. "This is the place where the King of France recently stopped which is the custom of this court because there are not enough palaces," he further reported.

The reason for the King of England's delay in receiving the Queen of Portugal was the embarrassing trick played on the child by history. When she had set

sail for Europe from Brazil in the British ship Red Pole, the crown of Portugal had appeared to be in the Brazilian bag, the fates having abdicated in her favour. Impoverished Portugal was deeply in debt to England and the creditor country knew that the only hope of getting back their loan was through the wealth of the rebellious and now independent Brazil. Assistance to the Queen of Portugal who was at the same time a Princess of Brazil looked like a politician's short cut to reimbursement. But in the meantime Maria da Gloria's uncle, erstwhile fiancé, former Regent and now usurper, had persuaded the Duke of Wellington that the people of Portugal preferred a king to government by crinoline.

So George IV deemed it expedient to be unavailable. He was ill—he was having the Palace redecorated. It was only after Barbacena had pointed out that if the decorations were not soon completed British interests in Brazil might suffer, that an audience was granted. Maria da Gloria was able to leave the near vicinity of St. James's and Barbacena could write to the Emperor: "Today the visit took place . . . although the King can hardly stand on his enormous legs (he perspires in bucketsfull and tires at the slightest effort to move) he absolutely insisted on walking to the first stair-landing in order to receive the Queen and to lead her from Salon to Salon."

Maria da Gloria was in!

And so on 28 May the Children's Ball took place, and the palace became a dream of polished parquet, and Waldteufel waltzes, and the two little royal nine-year-olds, both in their best, were

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

OPPOSITE: Queen Victoria as a child of four At Kensington Palace they called her Drina. For informed comment on the costume of the period turn to James Laver's article on page 28





*For Maria da Gloria the evening brought tears—she had slipped and fallen while dancing. Princess Victoria hurries to comfort her*

whirled away by their noble partners. The Duke of Argyll has left a record of these fortunate partners and so we know that the Princess Victoria at her first ball danced with Lord FitzAlan, the future Duke of Norfolk, Prince William of Saxe-Weimar, the young Prince Esterhazy and the sons of Lords De La Warr and Jersey. Maria da Gloria danced the first quadrille with the son of the Prince Lieven; the second with the son of the Prince de Polignac; the third with the son of the Marquess of Palmella, and the English Lancers with the nephew of the Marquess of Londonderry. *"And though the performance of Dona Maria was greatly admired,"* writes the Duke of Argyll, *"all persons of refined taste gave the preference to the modest graces of the English-bred Princess."*

A dream, then, of gliding, turning, chasséeing. The Queen's own dancing master directed the ball and the two young royal ladies danced in the same quadrille. Maria da Gloria, Barbacena tells us, looked very splendid, *"her dress was encrusted with jewels."* And we can imagine the flashing of the Brazilian diamonds, the deep blue sapphires and shallow aquamarines, the rubies and the purple amethysts of Brazil shining against the stiff gold damask of Spain as the Queen of Portugal went spinning round beneath the candelabra. *"The Queen was finely dressed,"* noted Mr. Greville, the wicked uncle of the diarists, for once in a kindly mood, *"she sat by the King. She has a sensible Asturian countenance."* But His Grace of Argyll informs us that *"the heiress formed a strong contrast to the glare and glitter around the precocious Queen."* Mr. Greville, however, has it that *"Our little Princess is a short, plain-looking*

*child and not near so good-looking as the Portuguese. However, if Nature has not done so much, Fortune is likely to do a great deal more for her."*

The King looked very well and stayed at the ball till two while in this dream of flying ribbons and satin dancing slippers, the evening whirled away. The dancers were wearing bombazine and algérine, barège and veluto, mull and alpaque, peau d'ange and pekin, and satin esmeralda with passementerie; taffetas and leno lawn, mousseline and poplin, piqué, foulard, benzaline and balzarine, challis and tarlatan, calamanco, carmeline, clementine, chiffon

gros-des-Indes, paduasoy and looking-glass silk and la sylphide and many, many other tissues with enchanting names.

But silken dreams can turn to nightmares, and polished parquet floors can have their perils, and before the ball was over that hybrid blossom Queen Maria da Gloria had slipped and fallen down and dissolved into scalding tears like any over-excited nine-year-old from a common or garden nursery. Oh, the hot-cheeked shame of it! They carried her carefully off the floor and the Monarch himself consoled his discomforted guest of honour, and the dance went on.

The Princess Victoria, a kind little girl, showed great concern over her cousin's mishap. Was she, one wonders, reminded of the day, not so long ago, when she herself had had the mortification of falling in the street, on which upsetting occasion her own first words had been *"Does dear Mamma know that I am not hurt?"* Still in a dream, by now, of a soft May dawn, two little girls were driving home through Knightsbridge in two grand carriages. One, the little, lucky "Drina" to be kissed good night by her well-pleased Mamma (did the feathers of the Duchess of Kent's head-dress tickle the pink ear of her daughter as she inclined her head in the maternal embrace?) to be put to sleep with a glass of warm milk. The other to drive on and on through the awakening countryside to Laleham, upheld by the knowledge that she had done her country—both her countries—credit. Was it a dream that she had tumbled down and cried, like a little girl? Oh, almost certainly it had been just another dream inside a dream of cotillions and ices.



*Princess Victoria at nine. The ball was held four days after her birthday*

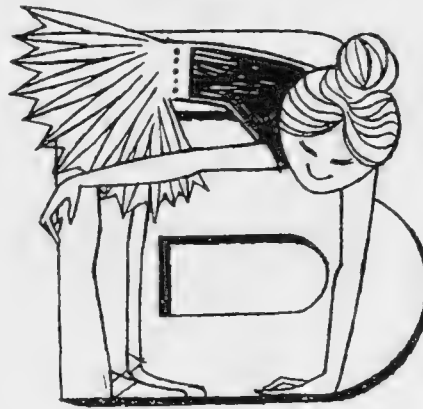


# ALPHABET SOUP

A CHILD'S GUIDE TO ENTERTAINMENT COMPILED BY J. ROGER BAKER/LETTERED BY BAYLIS & ADAM



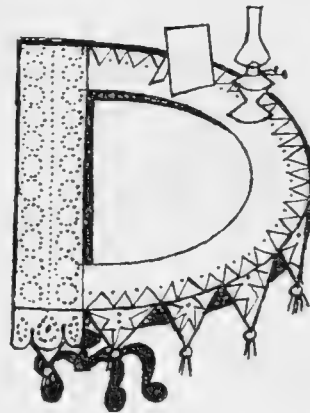
is for Asides, Actors & Audience: Asides are when Actors talk to the Audience about each other; or when the Audience talks to each other about the Actors loud enough for the Actors to hear; when Actors talk to each other about other Actors quietly, then it is called gossip. Also stands for Auditorium and Amphitheatre



is for Ballet: A way of telling a story by dancing it. This enables a three-minute play to take three hours and is therefore economical with material. Also stands for Balcony, which is the best place from which to see Ballet; and for Bart, Lionel, who hasn't written a Ballet yet—but give him time



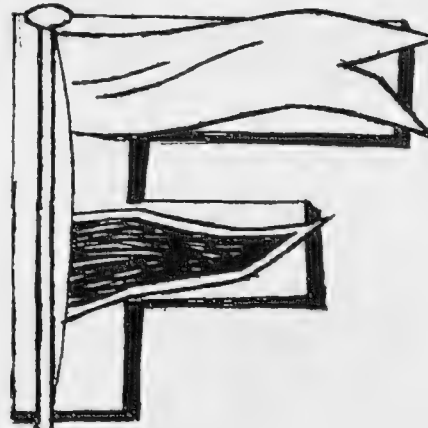
is for Critics: A collection of kindly uncles (Uncle Milton, Uncle Kenneth, Uncle Robert, Uncle Harold & Uncle Felix) who help actors and playwrights by telling them what they are doing wrong. Also stands for Callas, Maria; Coward, Noël, and the Crazy Gang, about all of whom the uncles disagree and become less kindly



is for Drawing-room: A setting for a play if it is to be a commercial success and a failure with the critics (see C. and cf. K); must include French windows. Also stands for Dame, Peggy/Flora/Edith/Sybil/Judith; and for Duck, The Wild, which isn't allowed in a Drawing-room



is for Extras: People who have nothing to say for themselves; they carry swords and spears in Shakespeare (see S), clutter up the staircase in the Act Two finale and walk on at the wrong time. Also stands for Epic and Equity, both Essential for Extras to Exist

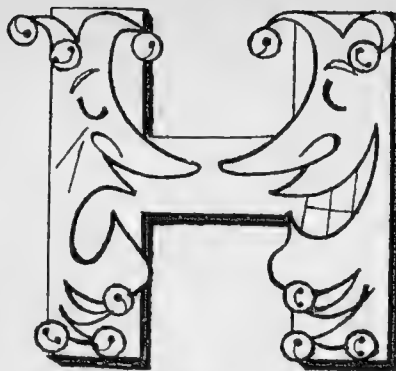


is for Festival: In which representatives of the more esoteric sides of the Arts descend on an unknown town, usually approachable only by boat and with no hotels. (See also G and Y.) Also stands for Full houses and Flops, both found at Festivals

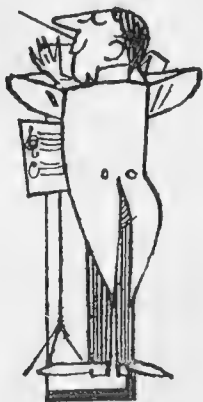




is for Glyndebourne: An operatic Festival (see F) where three hours are spent getting there and getting back; one and a half hours eating; half an hour walking round the lily pond; one hour listening to music; one hour watching other people listening to music



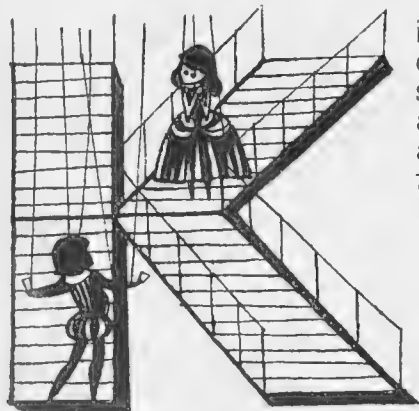
is for Hilarotragedia: This means "merry tragedy," and I'm no wiser either. Also stands for Horror films, and Hammer, the company that makes them. Come to think of it, Horror films are pretty hilarotragedic



is for Incidental music: Sound effects that drown the speeches in a play every now and then, and provide an agreeable background for chatting. Has been known to earn a mention in the Daily Telegraph. Also for Irving, Sir Henry, who could over-shout it, and for Ionesco, Eugene, who often needs it



is for Juvenile lead: Not necessarily as young and fresh off stage as on. Said: "Anyone for tennis?" before 1939, and "What about Russia/the Bomb/Me?" since. Also for Johnnies, stage-door, and Joan, Saint. The former would wait for the latter



is for Kenny, Sean; A device that makes the stage go round; and up; and down; and sideways; and inside-out. Also stands for King, John/Richard/Henry (I-VIII)/Priam/Kong



is for Leading Lady: A part every other woman in the show knows she can play better than the one who is. Also for Limelight, their natural habitat



is for Method: A type of acting without any. Also stands for Mystery and Morality plays which usually contain little of either



is for National Theatre: An empty space on the South Bank. Also for Natural break, which occurs every 15 minutes on I.T.V. to interrupt that fascinating programme



is for Opera: A way of telling a story by singing it (cf. Ballet). This enables a three-hour play to take six hours and is therefore economical with material. Also stands for Osborne, John, who likes England so much he writes letters to it when abroad, and plays for it



is for Pantomime: An entertainment that re-tells some well-known fairy story in a manner too adult for children and too embarrassing for adults. Also for Producer, usually found sobbing in the stalls, blushing in a box or fleeing towards Waterloo Bridge; and for Prompt, not to be confused with Aside (see A)

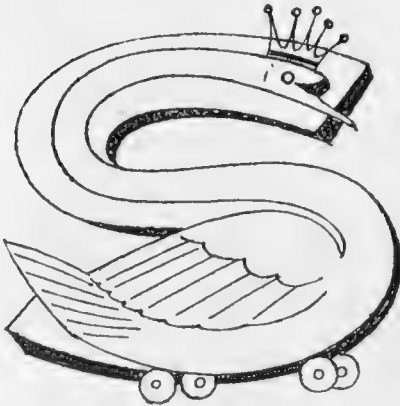




is for Quote: A line from a play to be repeated in conversation or as an aside (see A) showing you have grasped the vital essence of the work. Also for Queues which should be avoided since they tend to form outside un-smart plays



is for Royal Court: A theatre where commercial success means red faces, and Shakespeare (see S) is performed according to the Method (see M). Also for Redgrave: Michael/Vanessa/Corin/Lynn, who appear in various combinations at the Royal Court and in Trafalgar Square



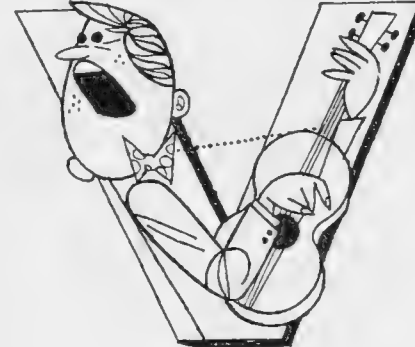
is for Swan Lake, and Sylphides, Les: Basic ballets (see B), the first involving hunted-looking ladies in short white dresses; the other involving haunted-looking ladies in long white dresses. Also stands for Shakespeare, a dramatist whose plays are believed by some to have been written by another man with the same name



is for Temperament: a quality evenly distributed among actors, and to a greater extent among opera (see O) singers, but even more among film stars, allowing them to lead a life of Cleopatra-like ease. Also stands for Tynan, Kenneth (see C), and Tempest, The, the last play written by either Shakespeare or Shakespeare



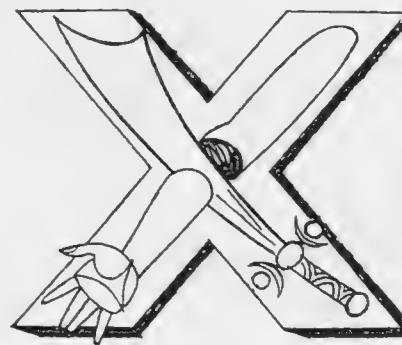
is for Up-staging: A way of acting that rivets the audience to the maid, while the leading lady is making her Renunciation speech. Children and dogs do this with no effort at all. Which accounts for the way most actors feel about children and dogs. Also stands for Ustinov, Peter, a sort of theatrical central heating system



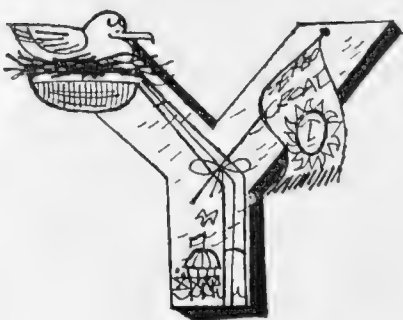
is for variety: a television programme consisting entirely of popular singers. Considered by many a sad decline from the Great Days when it consisted of Artistes who sang the Good Old Songs of the day. Also for Vic, Old; Vanya, Uncle, and Vortex, The



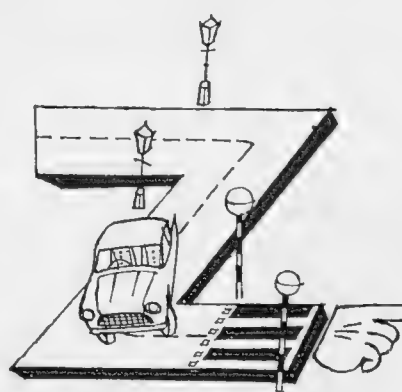
is for Williams, Tennessee: An American playwright fond of bird watching and the folk customs of the Deep South. Also for Wesker, Arnold, who writes plays about food such as chicken soup, roots, barley and chips and other kitchen materials; and for West End, a sort of theatrical shambles



is for X-certificate: A diploma awarded for violence and violation on the screen. Also for Xerxes, an Italian opera written by a German composer called Handel working in England, which just about sums up opera (see O); and for X-ray, the sort of eyes needed for sitting behind pillars



is for Yarmouth: Just the sort of place where next year's Festival (see F) of Serbo-Croatian life, literature & thought is likely to be held. Also for Yardstick, an instrument critics (see C) carry in their pockets, and for Yawn, which they tend to wear towards the end of productions at the Old Vic (see V)



is for Z-cars: A method of upsetting the police. And for Zeffirelli, Franco, a useful name to drop during an aside (see A); and for Ziegfeld, Flo, who made lots of money through his follies





*Haro shows how other people's children and other people's parents look on*







# PARENTS' DAY



\*

For what's on the noticeboard turn to page 58



# THE REVOLUTION ROUSSEAU BEGAN



James Laver, the distinguished historian of dress, writes about the way we clothed our children until the realization dawned that they were neither adults in disguise nor animated puppets for ornament only

CHILDREN WERE LUCKIER IN primitive times. They were allowed to run about naked until the age of puberty, and even then their garments were more in the nature of status-symbols than anything we would recognize today as clothing. This state of things continued even when civilizations had been established. When we look at Egyptian wall-paintings we can see that not only the servants but the young princesses wore no clothes at all. The Ancient Greeks had a similar attitude, for though boys and girls were provided with simple garments, they invariably took them off when exercising in the gymnasias. The Greeks had no horror of the body.

Such horror seems to have been a Semite invention, for the young in Assyrian bas-reliefs are almost as much bedizened with fringed shawls as their elders. The Semite attitude was carried over into Christianity and intensified by it. Young people have suffered much from this until very recently, indeed until the lifetime of the present writer.

Christianity had another unfortunate effect. The doctrine of Original Sin made it seem as if there were something disgraceful in being a child at all. Children, being naturally evil, had only one hope: to imitate the behaviour of grown-ups: that is of those who were at least supposed to have outgrown the follies of youth. But if it is thought desirable that children should resemble adults as closely as possible, it is logical to dress them like adults.

This is precisely what was done, until the second half of the eighteenth century. In an age when men wore lace and ruffles little boys were expected to do the same. When fine ladies were tightly laced, little girls were squeezed into corsets from their earliest years. Indeed only so was it possible for them to get into grown-up corsets when the time came. It was necessary for them to be permanently deformed. Small wonder that many of them grew up weak and sickly and even with curvature of the spine. Of course we are speaking only of the children of the prosperous classes. The children of the poor were luckier, at least in that respect.

Then arose Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who looked at the world about him and saw that it was very bad. "Man was born free and is now everywhere in chains." Civilization, he

opined, was one huge mistake and, in contrast to the sophisticated men of his own day, he pointed to the Noble Savage. Children benefited from this because, noble or not, they were certainly savages. The idea, at long last, had begun to dawn that they were not (and ought not to be) miniature replicas of their elders, but were creatures with their own rights and their own needs.

Children like to play! This seems obvious enough to us, but it was by no means taken for granted in earlier ages. Even the great (and benevolent) John Wesley, when drawing up the rules for his school at Kingswood, decreed that there should be no play-time whatever. "For if they play when they are young they will play when they are old." Fortunately, in this matter at least, the ideas of Rousseau prevailed and, in the second half of the eighteenth century, there was a real improvement in children's clothes. Girls abandoned the tight corsets, the hoops, the heavily embroidered skirts and the elaborate head-dresses, and were clad in simpler garments, usually white, with a broad ribbon round the waist. This was a curious anticipation of the dress of women after the French Revolution: the so-called Empire style. Boys too anticipated the grown-up clothes of a later age, for they were put into trousers at a period when every gentleman wore knee-breeches.

In the closing years of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century clothes for both boys and girls were really very sensible—far more sensible than they were afterwards to become. The boys had loose, light-coloured garments, open at the throat; the girls had dresses the only fault of which was that they were too long. The girls had no constriction round the waist and the boys had no constriction round the neck, these being the two stock vices of male and female dress respectively.

But soon after the accession of Queen Victoria boys' clothes had become tighter and less comfortable again, and little girls were once more burdened with a multiplicity of petticoats. It is true that their skirts were shorter, but there was a new complication, a new hindrance to active play: the absurd convention known as pantalettes. These were long white drawers with lace frills visible below the skirt. Sometimes they were false, being merely cloth tubes tied on



above the knee. Boys at this period were clothed in long trousers and a short coat without tails, derived from the "Spencer," and known to us in its fossilized form as the Eton jacket. The Eton collar—that starched vice enclosing the neck—was happily still in the future. The original collar was similar in form but larger, loose and floppy, and it must have been much more comfortable than its descendant.

As the century progressed girls' clothes became more and more absurd. Quite small children were put into crinolines, and even the crinoline was better than the bustle that followed it in the early 1870s. Dresses were made tighter and the neckline fitted more closely. Instead of the charming heel-less slippers of the previous age, childish feet were confined in high button boots. Boys' clothes in the 70s touched the height of unpractical absurdity, with hard hats, stiff collars and hideous trousers which were neither long nor short, but reached to mid-calf.

Relief from these rigidities was found by aesthetic parents in the "Little Lord Fauntleroy" outfit, and by more sensible ones in the Norfolk jacket and the sailor suit. But even the Norfolk jacket was often spoiled by the addition of a stiff white Eton collar. Shorts for boys did not come into fashion until about 1914. Some public schools like Radley had the sense to adopt a school uniform of grey flannel shorts and jacket. Girls' school uniforms became less hideous and the ridiculous wide-brimmed straw hat was replaced by a felt or panama. Very young children of both sexes were put into rompers, and some nursery schools have even reverted to the complete nudity of primitive times.

Children of today should be grateful that their clothes are now designed chiefly for their own convenience and comfort and not to display the social status of their parents or their "artistic" taste. Parents too should be grateful not only for a diminution of laundry bills but for the disappearance of all those nursery tantrums which were directly due to the practice of dressing children in clothes unsuitable for their years.

*Father to the man: the little boy in doublet and ruff with a falcon on his wrist, lived to become King James I of England. An unknown artist painted him at the age of eight. Picture by courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery*







*Fashion plate of the early 1850s. The little girl shows the lace pantalettes below the skirt. The little boy is quite comfortably dressed*



*Fashion plate of the 1870s. The girl wears a bustle and high-button boots. The little boy is in an early version of the sailor suit*



*Fashion plate of the mid-century. Both figures represent boys. It was the fashion to dress boys in semi-feminine garments until about the age of six*

*Royal fashion plate. Two Stuart children, Prince James Francis Edward and Princess Louisa Maria Theresa, bewigged, mantillaed, frock-coated and gowned in exact imitation of adult court dress. Picture by courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery*









SEALYHAM BY HARRODS: BOY BY DAVID AND SHEILA SIM

# ONE BOY AND HIS PUP

A LONDON ODYSSEY PHOTOGRAPHED BY DAVID SIM

*It's a dog's life for a puppy... all that fresh air exercise at the end of a lead isn't really living at all... not when you think of all the sights of London within a short bus ride. Parents don't understand, they'd take me but leave the puppy behind. So we made a plan, puppy and me. Tomorrow morning we'd get up early and I'd show him Wilson's Column, Buckingham Palace and the seaside under the bridges. There's 2s. 1d. in the piggy bank and I can put sandwiches and a bottle to drink from in my satchel. I think that's everything and now we must get some sleep...*







... I think this is where we get off, yes I'm sure it is because that's where the Queen lives and they keep on Changing the Guard ... we have to cross here where it's marked in stripes, come on it's quite safe. Let's sit down on the steps ... I

don't know who the boy is with the bow and arrow except that it isn't Wilson but I do know that this round space is called Piccallili Circus ... wonder where the animals are ...





*... there was more river here the last time. I expect the tide has gone out ... wonder where it goes to. We'll have lunch here while I think where*



*to take you next. Help yourself from my satchel—the thick sandwiches are cheese—and you can have a drink after me. Time to move on now.*

*We'll have a ride on an engine in the Festival Pleasure Gardens. I'll drive, you be the fireman. Hold very tight, please . . .*













*... I thought you'd like to see Hamley's. Daddy brought me here at Christmastime and I'll bring you again on your birthday... I know you've been on the lead nearly all day but I'm not supposed to let you off in the park so I'll carry you instead. Now lie quietly beside me under this tree while I have another think about where to go next... shouldn't wonder if we both fell asleep...*





*... this is a Horse Guard really but his horse is inside having its lunch... wonder what they use to polish his long boots. I know Wilson's Column is along here somewhere—can't think how we've missed it. But you*



*know, puppy, I'm getting a funny feeling that we're lost. Mummy always said when that happened I should ask a policeman. Let's sit down on the kerb and perhaps one will soon come along and show us the way...*





*... Mummy, mummy, we've had such a day and been all up and down and seen the Palace and the Park and driven an engine and seen the fountains only then my feet got sore and then we were lost and then a policeman found us and we came home in a Z-car and do you know, Mummy, after all that we never did find Wilson*





# THE SECRET PLACE

DRAWINGS BY SUSAN EINZIG

BY JOAN AIKEN

On a sleepy afternoon in a Kentish market town  
childhood memories stirred to life and that night in  
the meadows by the river someone was waiting

THE little town hadn't changed a bit. It seemed amazing, after 15 years. I'd been so far, done so much—and there was the market square, with one old dozing East Kent bus, the budding willow trees, the cobbles—even the same estate-agents, Voss & Penberthy, still advertising the same sales of farms with Live & Dead Stock. But they offered something else too—a top flat, furnished, in Cobbler's Plat, an attractive old house in the High Street.

I'd intended putting up at the Bell, but I found myself in the estate-office instead. Old Penberthy was in there, still brooding over his postal chess game. It might have been only half an hour since I'd handed him the house keys and said goodbye.

"Why bless me," he said, pushing aside the squared form and little chess set. "It's young Tom Rankin. What are you doing here? I thought you were building post offices in Cape Town."

"I'm building a new parish church in Fiddleden," I said.

"Blimey," he said, "did they really manage to raise that twenty thousand at last? How's your father, Tom?"

"He died five years ago."

"Sorry to hear that. Sorry to hear that, boy. As you see, things don't change here."

"You haven't checkmated old Smith yet?"

"Scores of times, me boy," he chuckled.

It was all so familiar—the dustily warm little office, Penberthy chuckling over his endless chess game—that a whole knot of buried memories stirred to life. It was on the tip of my tongue to say "How's Emma? Is she still here?"—but somehow I didn't. Instead I asked, "What's the rent of the flat in Cobbler's Plat?"

He laughed gustily. "Isn't that a coincidence? First time we advertise a vacant flat in the High Street for ten years, and you walk in and snap it up, and it's in your old home. Well, I can tell you this—it's within

*your* means, if you're building churches, you prosperous young dog."

The house hadn't changed much. The box-room had been made into a bathroom, the room beyond—which had been my father's study—was a kitchen-dining-room, and my own bedroom was the flat living-room. The view was exactly the same—our garden, with the laburnum tree, Miss Gaddow's garden—or whoever was next door now—with the high board fence beyond, the lane that led to fields, and the little Quaker churchyard. I almost expected to see Emma, as I had the first time, standing so still in a corner of Miss Gaddow's garden, with her face to the fence.

But there was no one. The garden was untidy and forlorn, with unpruned rambler roses trailing and weeds between the paving-stones. That house, too, was now all flats.

I went out to buy groceries, trying to kid myself that I wasn't suffering from a queerly demoralizing feeling of loneliness and anticlimax. Which was absurd because I'd have sworn that, before I reached the town, the thought of Emma had never entered my head; I'd completely forgotten her.

Or had she been waiting all the time in some closed cupboard of my mind?

I asked the shop to deliver the groceries and went round to the Bell for dinner. The Whartons were still running it and we exchanged some gossip about old times. Once again I didn't ask about Emma. Drinking my coffee quickly I decided I didn't want to go back to the empty flat yet, so I walked up to the Martello gardens at the top of the hill by the town ramparts.

It was a cold night. A north wind like a razor had rummaged out some of last year's dead leaves and was scuttering them over the gravel. The moon raced through clouds overhead. Not unnaturally the gardens were deserted, and I walked through them slowly, remembering that torturing last moment when, at the age of twelve, I'd had my final glimpse of Emma.

At mid-morning all the little girls from her school were taken on a fast, decorous walk as far as the ramparts and back. They came along in a crocodile—eleven couples in purple-spotted cotton dresses, white gloves, and identical hideous panama hats, so wide-brimmed that you couldn't see who was underneath. Old Miss Annalin was in charge of the crocodile. She gave me a fishy stare, but I didn't care. Father and I were catching the one o'clock train, the house was sold and locked, the luggage was at the station, this was my last chance, and I was desperate to see Emma. I edged nearer to the crocodile's course, scrutinizing each couple as they came abreast of me. At last I saw Emma's fair plaits, her thin legs in the too-big stockings which always wrinkled at the ankles.

"Emma!" I willed her silently. "Look this way. Please look this way."

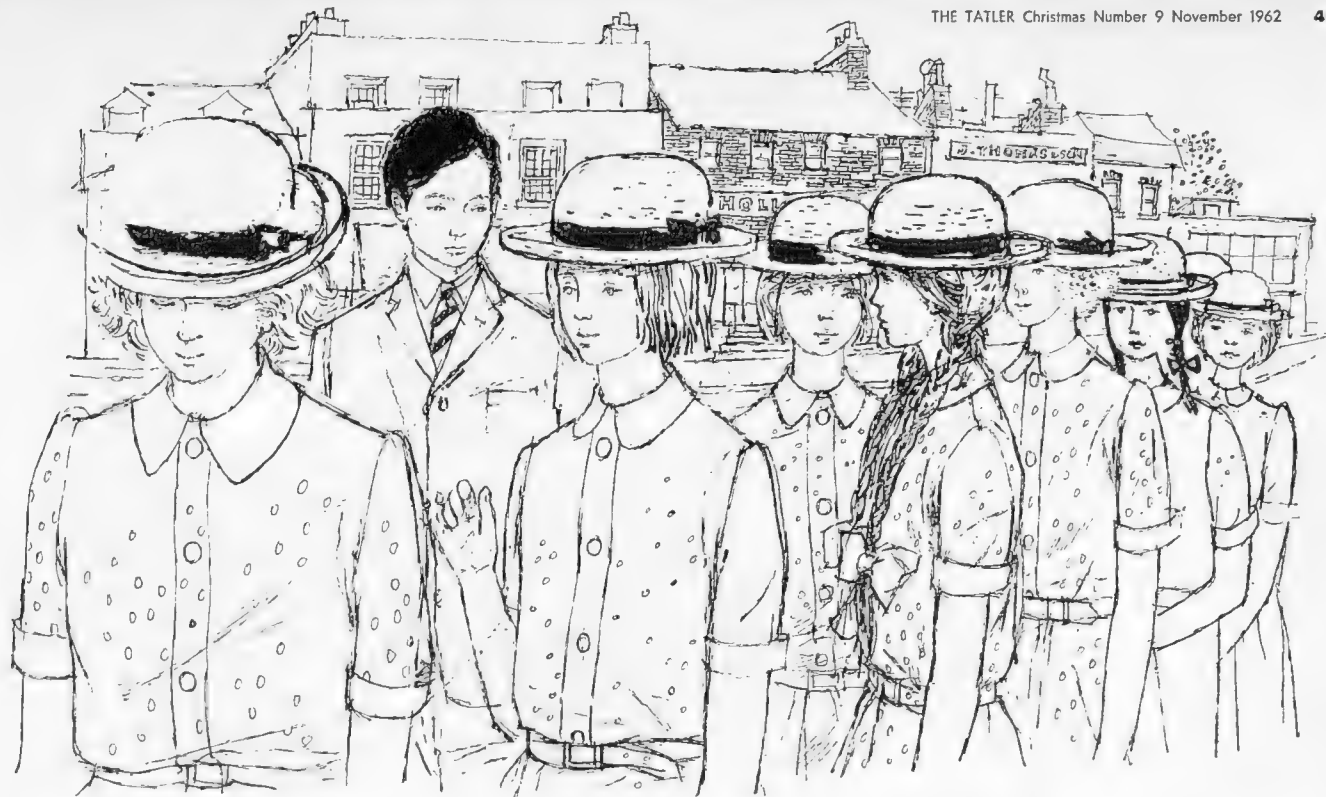
The girl walking ahead of her said something and she turned her head towards me. I had one quick glimpse of her dark-grey eyes, so full of reproach and pain that I didn't know how to bear them, lips pressed together in a stoic line of suffering—and then she violently snapped her head round the other way, walking on so fast that the crocodile was jostled out of its orderly precision.

What had I expected? That she would run to me and listen to my explanations, that, like Young Lochinvar, I would carry her off into the sunset? I hardly knew. I was only twelve, remember. What actually happened was that I stood there frozen with hurt, until it was too late to do anything. When I followed the crocodile into the street I met my father looking for me.

"Tom!" he said. "Hurry up! We're going to miss the train if we don't jump to it."

We didn't miss the train. It took us to Southampton, where we caught a boat for Cape Town, and that was the last time I'd seen Emma.





*At mid-morning the crocodile set out—eleven couples in purple-spotted cotton dresses, white gloves and panama hats*

"What's the use of writing?" she'd said. "To start with, Aunt wouldn't allow me—and you're hopeless at letters, Tom."

Nonetheless I had sent her a couple of picture postcards, but I had no means of knowing if Emma had even seen them. . . .

I sighed. It was too cold to stand about, and I left the ramparts to return to the flat. As I moved, a shadow detached itself farther along and crossed the lawn, walking diagonally towards me. It was a girl, and when she came nearer I saw to my amazement that she was barefoot. Was she mad? There was a thickish frost on the grass.

She was dark-haired, wore some sort of dark coat. As she came closer I was ridden by doubt and stupid hope: could she, by some miracle, be Emma? I wanted to believe so—walking barefoot in the frost was just the sort of crazy thing Emma might have done—but Emma had been fair, this girl was dark and short-haired. I couldn't see her face very clearly. I took a couple of steps in her direction, but when she saw me she made an odd gesture—a sort of warding-off movement with her right hand—and walked swiftly away. She might almost have been a ghost.

I went back to the flat. Out of habit I nearly looked behind the loose brick in the gate pillar to see if there was a note there: *See you at the S.P. Emmy.*

I made a pot of coffee and pulled out the blueprints of the beautiful new church which was going to replace St. Saviour's, Fiddledon, demolished by flying bombs nearly twenty years ago. But I couldn't concentrate. I remembered again that first time I'd seen Emma. I was nine. Mother had died two years before and Father and I had slowly got used to the situation. We had to. Father, as he explained to me, was a one-woman man, and he wasn't going to have any well-meaning females interfering with his arrangements. Luckily he wasn't much troubled by this sort; old Miss Gaddow next door didn't overwhelm us with offers of help; she was lame, and

believed in people minding their own business, and anyway she hated children.

And then Miss Gaddow's very much younger half-sister, who had run off with an American, died, and Emma came to live with her aunt.

Emma was six then. One evening I looked out of my window and there she was, at the end of Miss Gaddow's garden beyond the laurel bushes, motionless, facing the fence. She stood so still for so long that I became intrigued. I ran downstairs, up the street, and back down the little lane behind the houses, till I was behind our two houses. There was a knothole in Miss Gaddow's fence. I looked through. Emma was still there, statue-still.

"Boo!" I said.

She flinched a little with surprise, then her eyes found the knothole.

"Shush!" she said. "If Aunt hears you she'll be angry."

"What are you doing?"

"I'm in disgrace. I have to stand here till bedtime."

"Why?"

"I don't know," she said forlornly. Up till now she had been composed, but her control slipped under my sympathy and I saw a tear gather at the corner of one eye.

"When is your bedtime?"

"I don't know."

"Here, have a thirst-quencher," I said.

"But at this moment Miss Gaddow's voice called 'Emma! Bedtime!'"

Emma gave me a scared look and ran.

I'd long ago decided that Miss Gaddow was a hateful woman—she had disapproved of my mother—and this confirmed it. I aimed a furious kick at her fence and one of the boards fell in, leaving a gap. Sucks to her.

Next day Emma was there again, by the fence.

"Are you still in disgrace?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"I don't know."

"Did you break something?"

"No. She won't let me touch anything. And I'm not to play with anything in the garden."

"Why don't you run away?"

"I don't know where to run to."

Children accept the oddness of grown-up behaviour to an amazing degree. For several weeks I talked to Emma through the gap in the fence and offered her consolation in the form of thirst-quenchers, but it never occurred to me that anything could be done about her undeserved punishment. Miss Gaddow made her stand by the fence every day, as long as it wasn't actually raining, from the end of school hours till bedtime.

One day Emma said, "I've found out why Aunt punishes me."

"Why?"

"Because my parents weren't married."

Neither of us could see why that meant Emma should be punished, so I asked my father that night. He was a vague, dreamy man, he taught English at the Grammar School, but the story made him angry enough, when he understood it, to threaten Miss Gaddow with the N.S.P.C.C. unless she modified her treatment of her unwanted niece. This didn't sweeten neighbourly relations, but it did mean Emma was allowed to stay indoors when the weather was cold.

I suppose Emma had been a fearful blow to her aunt. The Gaddows were the oldest family in the town, and the existence of Emma was in itself a disgrace. Unfortunately Miss Gaddow was the only one of her generation left, so there was no one else to be responsible for Emma. Miss Gaddow sent her to school, but strictly forbade her to play with the other children or visit their homes.

Emma became a solitary, self-sufficient child who managed to amuse herself without toys or company.

But she and I used to have long conversations through the fence, and presently we realized that Miss Gaddow's lameness





*She might almost have been a ghost walking barefoot through the frost*

prevented her from coming to the end of the garden, and her short-sightedness from seeing whether Emma was there or not. Provided she presented herself at bedtime, Emma was free to escape through the hole in the fence, and so I took her to my Secret Place.

This was a derelict old bus in a field by the river. I had never discovered who owned the land, but nobody seemed to care about the bus, so I had taken possession. I dismantled what seats were left and made a chair and table, and a sort of cupboard, where I kept a miscellaneous assortment of weapons, books and food.

Emma soon had the bus tidied and civilized. She made me buy coloured cotton—Father, absent-minded and sad, would grant any reasonable request for money—and she made curtains herself. She painted orange-boxes and stuck pictures on the ceiling. Not only did she make the bus into a home, she peopled it with imaginary characters—a whole family of animals and people.

"You can't sit there!" she would exclaim, "Tigger's asleep on that seat. And mind where you tread, the ducklings are all over the floor. You can give them each a piece of bun, but leave out the ant-eater—he has a sore throat and I'm going to rub it with liniment after tea."

The other children at school thought Emma was crazy because her ideas were so unlike those of other people. They had to be. Her aunt never talked to her, so she had to think things out for herself. But she was so bright that after a year or two she was at the top of all her classes. She was quite indifferent to other people's opinions. Again, she had to be. Miss Gaddow dressed her in hideous clothes, bought too big, to last for years, but Emma didn't seem to mind much. When she was at our Secret Place she always put on an old flowered skirt of my mother's, to protect her own clothes. I used to bring supplies of food

and we became quite expert at camp cookery.

Of course, I didn't spend all my spare time at the bus. I was three years older, going to Grammar School now, and had other interests, other friends. But Emma seemed quite content if I turned up once a week or so. She entertained herself for hours at a time, singing songs and telling stories to the invisible family, writing long sagas in her diary. She always had some treat to welcome me when I came. By now the bus seemed more hers than mine. I'd sometimes leave a note behind the loose brick on my way to school: "See you at the S.P. Will bring sausages." Sometimes I had a subsequent engagement and didn't turn up, but she never complained.

Then the accident happened. I was keen on chemistry at that time and I brought a test-tube and some jars of chemicals down to the bus to try to make gunpowder.

"Tigger and the ducks won't like that much," Emma said dubiously.

"I shan't let it off in here, silly," I said. "Only mix it." I jiggled my mixture in a test-tube and then absently held it over the spirit-flame.

The next thing I remember was finding myself in the kitchen at home with Father telephoning for an ambulance. I was only half conscious because of the pain in my burnt face and hands, but I could hear Emma saying: "I must go now, Mr. Rankin. Will you please be very kind and not tell my aunt about this? She would be so furious if she knew I'd been outside the garden."

"But good heavens, child," said my father distractedly, "if you hadn't got Tom home—God knows how—he wouldn't have stood a chance. You ought to have a medal. Your aunt might feel differently if she knew—"

"Please, Mr. Rankin."

The ambulance stopped outside and he said doubtfully: "Oh, well, if you really

think . . ." and then I fainted again.

When I came out of hospital, two months later, everything seemed different. It's often like that after a violent accident or a long absence; you seem to have ended one era and started another. I felt I'd grown up a lot, and I was rather embarrassed at the thought that Emma had saved my life.

I didn't go back to the bus at all. Emma told me that most of our things had been burnt in the fire, and the inside of the bus was just a charred mess. Luckily nobody seemed to know; my father had never really gathered where the accident took place. But it had drawn his attention to the amount of time I was left on my own, unsupervised, and he became worried in case I should grow up a delinquent.

Soon afterwards he announced that he'd taken a post in a school in Cape Town where I could board. I was horrified. I protested, but children are so helpless. Father had made up his mind. The house was too big and full of memories, he said; it would be better for both of us to start afresh.

I met Emma in the street, coming home from school, and told her. She went quite white.

"You mean—go right away? For good? Not come back ever?" Her fingers dug into my arm.

"I'll come back when I'm grown up, I promise," I said dejectedly.

"Oh, then. What good is that?"

But she presently pulled herself together. She was still small for her age, but she had terrific powers of self-control.

"When are you going?"

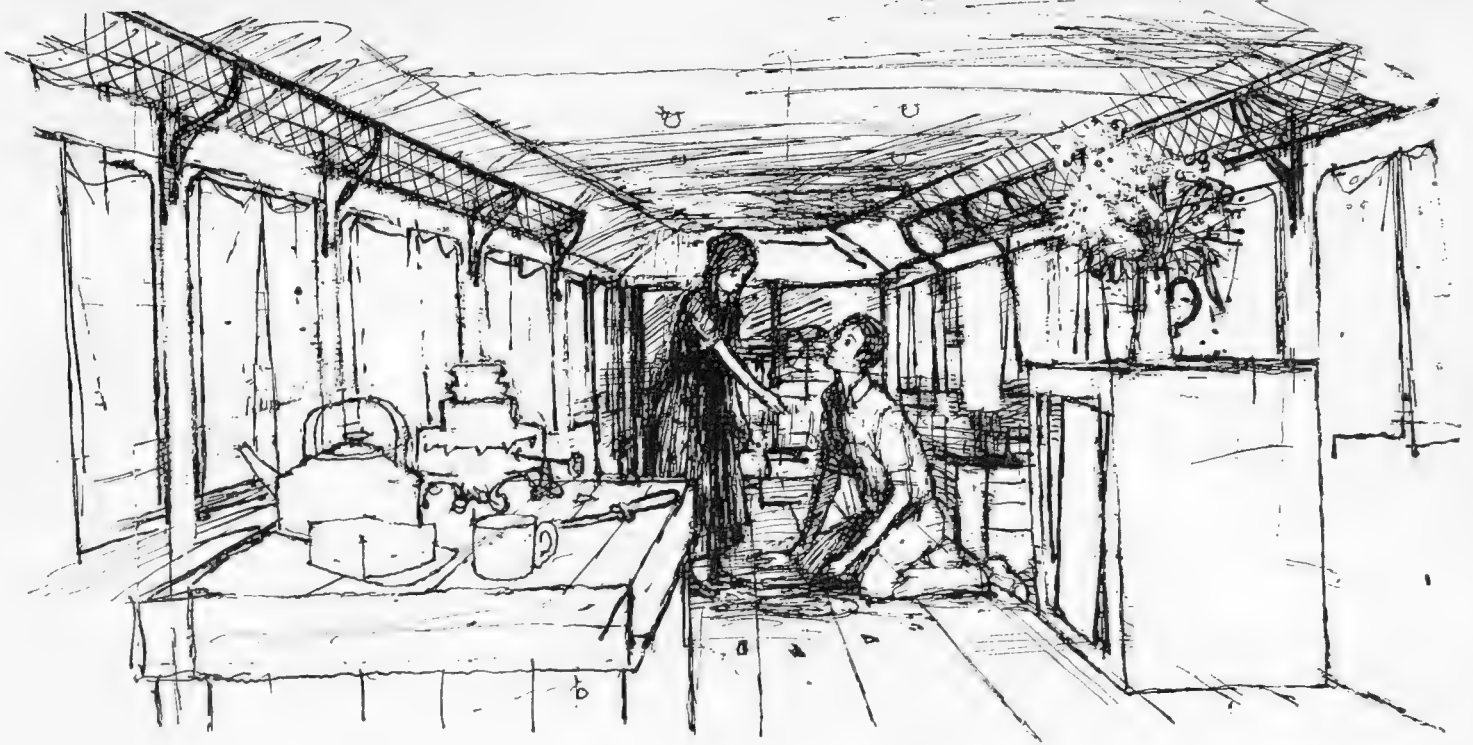
"On the 13th."

"You'll come down to the S.P. for a last supper before you go, won't you?"

"But I thought it was all burnt out inside."

"I've got it tidied up a lot," she said quickly. "And I'll get it better still."





*There was a derelict old bus in a field . . . Emma soon had it tidied and civilized*

"There doesn't seem much point." I felt uncomfortable. I was unhappy, too, but I couldn't see any sense in a last bit of make-believe among our blackened things. The truth was, I suddenly felt I had grown out of the Secret Place.

"Just to—to say goodbye properly." Her chin quivered.

"Oh, all right."

But on the day before we sailed my father wanted me to come with him in the car to say goodbye to some cousins. I might perhaps have got out of that—but I went, with a guilty feeling of relief. I think perhaps I could hardly face the thought of saying goodbye to Emma. I left a note in the gatepost, explaining that I'd had to go with Father and promising I'd run down as soon as we got back. I was nearly caught by Miss Gaddow putting it there.

Unfortunately on the way home from the cousins we had a flat tyre and we didn't get in till long after dark. Next morning Emma went off to school early, while I was still helping Father finish the packing. . . .

It was getting late, and I'd planned to be out at the church site early next morning. I went to bed, but all night long, right through my sleep, I was haunted by the face of Emma as I'd seen it yesterday in the Martello gardens. My betrayal of her—for I now saw that was what it was—ached in my heart. Why hadn't I realized at the time?

Next morning, out at Fiddleden, I asked old Mordiford the builder what had become of Miss Gaddow.

"Oh, she died," he said. "Yes, she died some years aback."

"And what about the niece? What became of her?"

"Emma?" He scratched his head. "Let me see, now. Miss Gaddow, she was bedridden by the end. Emma had to nurse her, matter of four years or more. When the old lady died,

it turned out she'd left what money she had—'twasn't very much—to the hospital. Not a penny to Emma. But there was some property she'd forgotten to mention in the will, some of them meadows down by the river that flood every winter, and those went to Emma, I heard tell."

"What did she do?"

"She went up to London and got a job. I've heard she took to writing."

"Doesn't she ever come back?"

"Oh yes, she comes down, right enough. She comes down every summer," he said. "Now, about those foundations, Mr. Tom—"

That evening instead of going straight back to the flat I walked down the little lane to the watermeadows.

Incredibly, the old bus was still there. Someone had given it a coat of paint and a stove-pipe chimney, from which a plume of smoke was straggling. I tapped on the window. The dark-haired girl was inside, frowning over a typewriter. She turned and looked out.

And it was Emma.

She signalled me round to the door and came to meet me.

"You've gone dark," I said foolishly. She was wearing trousers and a yellow sweater.

"I got darker as I grew up," said Emma.

"It *was* you in the gardens last night!"

"I'm glad you didn't speak to me." She grinned to herself in exactly the way she used. "I had a sort of bet with myself that if I could walk barefoot from here to the ramparts and back, without anybody speaking to me—"

"Yes?"

"Never mind. It's nice to see you, Tom."

"It's nice to see *you*. How did you get on after we'd gone? Did your aunt ever come to behave a bit more decently?"

"Not really," Emma said, with an inward-

looking expression. "It was fairly bad. . . . But luckily she never found out about this place. I got it tidied up after the fire—remember? If I hadn't been able to come here, things would have been much worse; I was always grateful to you for this place. And oddly enough these fields were the only bit of property she left me. I let the grazing."

"Do—do you manage all right?"

She was so composed that it felt like an impertinence to ask. I felt a little bewildered, almost a little unhappy, in the presence of this self-possessed, adult creature.

"Oh yes," she said. "I manage quite well. I write. People seem to like my stuff."

"You always used to make things up."

"So I did. . . . Come in and I'll make you a cup of coffee."

She had got the bus beautifully fitted up inside. I stood uneasily, feeling like an interloper. Then suddenly I burst out—

"Do you know, ever since I saw you last I've been waiting to apologize for not coming down that day to say goodbye." As I said it, I knew it was true. Or why should I have taken pains to get the job at Fiddleden?

"But I understood, really," she said quickly. "I found out afterwards. I discovered your note among Aunt's papers. She must have seen you put it there, that last time, and taken it. And I found your postcards, too. There was no need to feel so bad, truly. After all, what's one goodbye more or less?" She handed me a cup of coffee and grinned. "What is much more surprising is that you should have kept your promise to come back!"

"It isn't surprising to me." I balanced the coffee on a shelf and was about to sit down, but she said quickly, "Not there, stoopid. That's Tigger's seat."

Then I really did know that I had come home.



# THE PLAYERS OF THE LITTLE ANGEL

BY J. ROGER BAKER

PICTURES BY ERICH AUERBACH



HE puppet theatre is frequently, and erroneously, regarded as an entertainment meant only for children. The belief has been strengthened by the traditional seaside Punch & Judy shows and in recent years the popularity won by such television characters as Andy Pandy and Muffin the Mule. But puppetry, rejecting the human element and stylizing real emotions, is by that definition intensely sophisticated. And since a puppet generally performs one function only—a part in a given play, or a juggling act—there is more than a feeling of the medieval mystery or morality in which actors represented abstract concepts, Lechery or Good Humour. The sophistication of puppets can again be seen in the macabre use made of them in certain horror films, and of course, the ballets *Petroushka* and *Coppelia*.

London has, at the moment, only one puppet theatre working on a commercial basis. This is the Little Angel Theatre in Islington. The Dr. Coppelius here is Mr. John Wright, the distinguished puppeteer who opened the Studio Theatre in Hampstead just after the war. His puppets have also appeared in films, notably in that eccentrically glamorous production of the *Tales Of Hoffman* in which one red-headed dancing marionette became Moira Shearer. Mr. Wright has toured widely, running puppet seasons in South Africa, Yugoslavia and West Germany. Just over a year ago, he took a bombed Temperance Hall adjoining the churchyard of St. Mary's in Islington and experimented with a puppet pantomime. In the summer two plays and a series of *divertissements* were given in repertory, as well as daily shows for local school-children. A second pantomime has reached the production stage for this Christmas.

Mr. Wright's puppets have a distinguished ancestry and heritage. Before the First World War, puppetry was much more widespread than it is today—the art itself can be traced back to Ancient Greece and the very beginnings of drama. In Restoration London Charles II patronized Devoto's puppet theatre at Charing Cross, and Powell's in Covent Garden was smart in the early 18th century. There were others in the Haymarket, the Strand, Savile Row, Regent Street and Piccadilly, while Dr. Johnson and his set appreciated the Italian Fantoccini in Panton Street. In 1599 a puppet play is recorded in St. John Street—on the way to Islington from Smithfield—but on that occasion the house fell down.

Considerable time and energy have transformed the ruined Temperance Hall into a small, comfortable theatre that is chic but not chi-chi, artistic but not arty. Among directors are Dame Flora Robson, Sir Basil Spence and Max Reinhardt. At first glance the back-stage area is remarkably like that of a live theatre scaled down. There are spot-lights, gauzes, props and curtains. There the resemblance ceases for a true puppet theatre has three operational levels. There is the stage itself; a cat walk above from

which the marionettes are manipulated and another below for glove and rod puppets. The puppets themselves hang in rows, their fixed grins and frozen attitudes eerie in the shadows and thin back-stage light. On the stage, however, they are animated to a remarkable degree and all sorts of effects are possible.

In each programme a complete play is given. *Make the Sheep Stealer*, the Wakefield Shepherds' play, is among those mounted. This 14th-century combination of the Nativity story and slapstick among shepherds has been arranged for puppetry by Mr. Wright. In it he uses a combination of stringed and rod puppets, the latter being smaller reproductions of the main characters and used for a cunning distance effect. Another play recently introduced into the repertory is Oscar Wilde's *Salome*, hardly meat for children, and some indication of the scope of puppetry.

The other part of each programme is a *divertissement*, a series of up to half a dozen individual items, each one showing off the capabilities of one particular figure such as the matador who climaxes the show with a splendid bull-fight. There are acrobats, stiltwalkers, even a trick cyclist. The figures are created in a workshop behind the theatre by Mr. Wright and five assistants, some of them art students. Great care is taken in the carving of individual limbs. I picked up a foot, noticing that the big and third toes were crossed over the second. Had the workman carving this foot done this for his own amusement I wondered. It seems that the character had to wear long, pointed shoes (medieval winkle-pickers) which would, in fact, determine such a squashed foot.

When a play is being prepared, the faces are all drawn first and the designs copied in wood. Articulation is another aspect needing expert care. Looking at some figures for *Salome* I asked what the effect would be when the seventh veil came off. "You will see a beautifully carved nude body," said Mr. Wright. The theatre has at the moment about 150 stars, 70 of which are an average of 26 inches high, the others 18 inches. For the layman who doesn't wish to drop a brick, "puppet" is a general term, "marionette" indicates that the puppet is worked by strings. The one term that must never be used is "doll" which drives puppeteers to a frenzy.

Though he likes to mount adult plays such as *Salome*, Mr. Wright's audience must mainly consist of children until the presence of the theatre is established. When he opened the theatre for children's performances, about 30 turned up for the first show. But the word spread. Fifty arrived the next day, and then 100 and more, some of whom had queued three hours from 8 a.m. "Children certainly love it. They come back again and again and chant the words as well." Mr. Wright believes that children are more sophisticated than their parents would like to think. He once put on the famous Victorian melodrama *Maria Marten* which, despite its horrific subject, was a wild success. And, of course, puppets affect adults too, mainly because they see beyond the knockabout and comic slapstick to the undertow of emotion.



Animals, angels and shepherds gather round the stable for the miraculous finale of *Mak the Sheep Stealer*, a 14th-century play presented by John Wright's marionettes. This, one of the Wakefield Shepherd plays, injects a touch of slapstick into the familiar Christmas story







Marionettes are created to do one act only. Unlike actors they do not appear in more than one play. These two puppets each have a special turn in the divertissement that ends John Wright's programme. Left is Joey the Clown whose knockabout antics are predictable perhaps, but still funny. Below is the matador whose bull-fight usually tops the bill





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## Shell guide to ANGLESEY



Once *yr ynys dywyll*, the dark island, the island dark with trees, Anglesey now has a bare look, a low island-county or sea-county of little fields, twisty lanes, outcroppings of ancient rock, white cottages, marshes, cliffs, shell-scattered sands, sea-air, heather, foxglove and gorse—about the most buttery, luscious gorse (1) in the world. Here the prospect is S.S.E., across the county to Ynys Seiriol or Priestholm or Puffin Island (where puffins (2) breed, and where the monks of St Seiriol's monastery at Penmon were buried), the Trwyn-Du Lighthouse and the B.B.C. mast above Beaumaris, where Edward I set his castle to command the Afon Fenai, or Menai Strait. Beyond the invisible strait rise the high mountains of North Wales. Antiquities abound, and some are collected here into the foreground—the Lligwy Burial Chamber (3) of the New Stone Age; the limestone huts and wall of Din Lligwy (4), fortified village of the 3rd and 4th century A.D.; the Penmon Cross (5) of about 1100 carved with the Temptation of St Anthony; and the medieval reliquary (6) sheltering the bones of a now forgotten saint in Llanidan Church, on the Menai Strait.

As for great men this Dark Island of the Trees was the stronghold of the Druids, who were probably Irish priests; and it was the native island of the Tudors, descendants of Sir Tudor Vychan, of Penmynydd, just a few miles beyond the Menai Bridge. Anglesey, by the way, is a Norse, and not an English or Welsh name—meaning the Island of the Fishhook, or Bend—i.e. the bending fjord of the Menai Strait.

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# YE SHUD A' SEEN US GANNIN



Aa went to Blaydon Races, 'twas on the ninth of June  
 Eighteen hundred and sixty-two on a summer's afternoon.  
 Aa tyuk the bus fra Balmbras and she was heavy laden.  
 Away we went along Collingwood Street that's on the road to Blaydon  
 Oh! lads ye shud a' seen us gannin  
 Passing the folks upon the road just as they were stannin'  
 Thor wis lots o' lads and lasses there, aall wi' smilin' faces  
 Gannin along the Scotswood Road to see the Blaydon Races



*Tyneside children held street tea-parties in Blaydon and lined the Scotswood Road to cheer the processions during a civic festival that celebrated the centenary of the Geordie anthem. Lucinda Lambton took the pictures and John Mann recreates the scenes of June 1862*



*We're not dressing. Tyneside children take a festival as they find it and if clothes, hands and face get grubby in the process, well, how else can you prove you had a good time?*



**T**YNESIDERS in the summer of 1862 were looking forward with special pleasure to the Whit-Monday break—not yet a Bank Holiday. A strike had failed in the local ordnance works and spirits badly needed a lift. Rising to the occasion George (Geordie) Ridley, an itinerant entertainer, wrote *Blaydon Races*, the anthem of Tyneside whose bouncy rhythm and lively vernacular have long outlasted the race meeting it celebrates.

Born at Gateshead in 1835, Ridley went into the mines when he was eight. An accident at the Gateshead Ironworks when he was 21 crippled him for the rest of his short life—he died before his 30th year. Forced out of heavy industry he became a songwriter and entertainer appearing first at the Granger Music Hall in 1856. Billed as “the pride of the mechanics’ Halls” he wrote his own memorial in the form of the long-enduring song.

Ridley first sang it five days before the

Whit holiday, on 4 June at Balmбра’s Music Hall in the Cloth Market—a theatre improvised by John Balmбра—a local *entrepreneur*, from the old Wheat Sheaf Inn. Geordie had written it to meet a request for a rousing song for a works’ outing to the races and it proved just the thing to put the Tynesiders, smarting from their strike defeat, into holiday mood again.

Characters associated with the heyday of Blaydon Races included One-Eyed Scottie with his row of medals, Tom Diamond of Gateshead and Charlie Watts, Fishy Job, Tea Cake, Tommy Dunn and Butcher Bill, the one-man Tote. A Mr. Webb ran a highly successful ploy that involved tossing gold sovereigns on to a set of racing silks but over all towered the legendary figure of Alice Gaul “the beauty of Gallowgate” whose war-cry was “a boiled egg and a biscuit, hinny.”

Gradually the races fell into disrepute. The practice became common of buying a

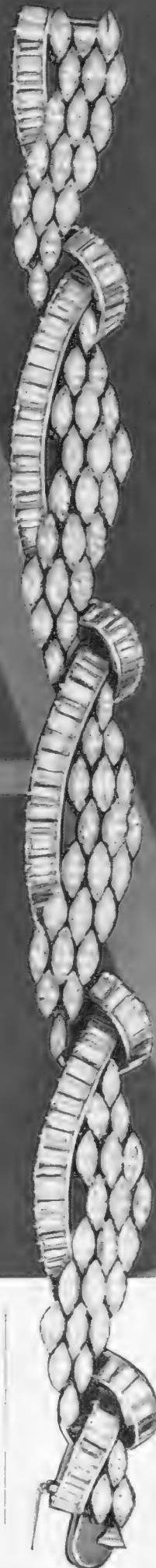
thoroughbred and racing it at Blaydon under a false name, the course became known as a welshers’ paradise and in 1916 it received a death blow. In September of that year the wartime ban on racing was raised for two days for the benefit of Tyneside munitions workers. But the rigging of a horse prophetically named *Anxious Moments* caused a riot during which jockeys were thrown into the river and the weighing room set ablaze.

The South Stella power station now covers the field where the meeting was held but this year Tyneside held a festival to commemorate the summer of 1862, when many of the scenes connected with Blaydon Races were re-enacted. The local authorities voted £20,000, not without some argument of a political tinge, but whatever the rights or wrongs of the matter Tyneside enjoyed itself in a manner that would have endeared itself to the crippled troubadour of Geordieland.



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Balloons and (right) roundabouts helped the Scotswood Road Fair along

## YE SHUD A' SEEN US GANNIN

Coconut shies, too—but at this stage little custom. Business quickened later



Left: Sitting out in a Blaydon backyard and (above) watching from a window as the colliery bands go by





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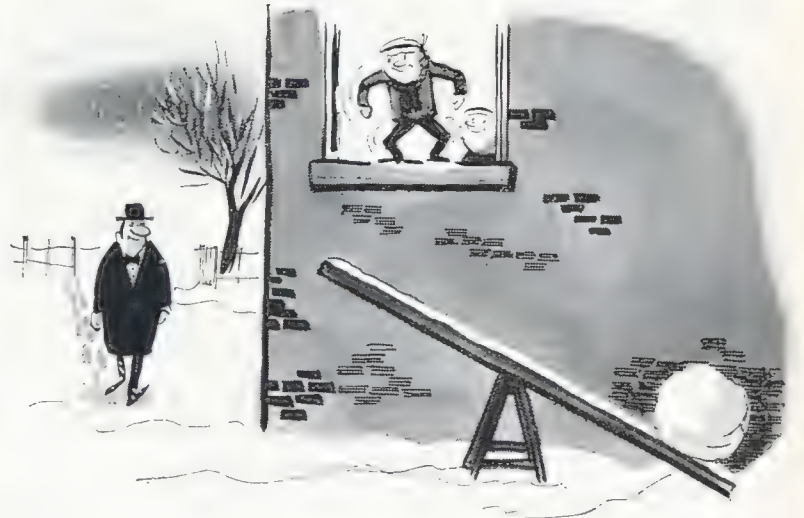
**—and you are.'**



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# BRIGGS FOR CHRISTMAS by Graham





**Note to children: This end-of-term examination for parents is designed primarily to test their ability to provide Christmas holidays that are stunning from start to finish. The experienced child should have no difficulty in assessing, from the answers, just what kind of a holiday he is in for**

# PARENTS'

# PLUS

BY ANGELA INCE

*The following rules should be strictly adhered to:*

*A maximum time of thirty minutes is allowed for the test.*

*It is preferable that both parents complete the test to obtain a detailed forecast of the holidays*

- 1 Insert the correct word in the following sentences:
  - (a) Mother always behaves.....at the school Nativity play  
(correctly; wildly; shamefully; graciously; loudly).
  - (b) Father Christmas only brings presents to.....children  
(good; rich; demanding; persevering).
  - (c) All the family gather together for.....on Christmas Day  
(breakfast; lunch; argument; tea; dinner).
  - (d) On Boxing Day we are always taken to.....by Mummy and Daddy  
(the circus; the pantomime; the Establishment; the Boxing Day meet).
  - (e) Tonight we will decorate the Christmas tree and Daddy will.....  
(leave; help; swear; go for a walk).
- 2 If it takes one father six hours to buy Christmas presents on 6 December, how long will it take four thousand fathers to buy Christmas presents on 24 December?
- 3 On 16 December Mrs. Jones bought eight 6d. pieces of wrapping paper, five yards of coloured string, two packets of labels. On 18 December Mrs. Jones bought four pieces of wrapping paper at 1s. each, four balls of tinsel, three packets of labels. Answer these questions after reading the above carefully:
  - (a) How many presents can the Jones children confidently expect to get?
  - (b) How many pieces of wrapping paper will Mr. Jones be sent out to buy on Christmas Eve?
  - (c) What will Mr. Jones say?
- 4 The Jones' sitting room measures 15 feet by 12 feet by 12 feet high. In this room the following objects are placed: one Christmas tree, with a height of  $12\frac{1}{2}$  ft. and circumference round the widest part of 6 ft.; one mother, 5 ft. 6 in.; one father, 6 ft. 1 in.; three children aged 6, 9 and 14 years; one cat, hitherto confidently believed to be male, and six kittens she produced last night; twenty-seven parcels, fully wrapped; a table 6 ft. by 5 ft., laid for breakfast; a hamster in a cage measuring 4 ft. by 3 ft.
  - (a) How many living things are in the room?
  - (b) How many inanimate objects are in the room?
  - (c) How long will the oxygen last out, assuming that it is used up at the rate of 1 cubic foot per person per twenty minutes?
  - (d) How long before one father goes out for two drinks?
- 5 Carefully read the following sentences, then underline the words in the list written below which best describe the atmosphere.  
 Granny Arbuckle came to lunch on Christmas Day, so did Granny Johnson. Granny Arbuckle brought Grandpa Arbuckle and Aunt Thelma Arbuckle. Granny Johnson brought Grandpa Johnson, Uncle Robert Johnson and Aunt Mary, and Baby Johnson. Granny Arbuckle arrived at 12.30, but Granny Johnson arrived at 1.15. Uncle Robert's car had a puncture. Granny Johnson had a glass of sherry. Granny Arbuckle told us she does not drink. The turkey was rather dry. Granny Johnson gave Mummy a good recipe for Christmas pudding. Daddy had a brandy. Grandpa Johnson had a brandy.  
*lovable; electric; alarming; happy; gloomy; loud; quiet; tiresome.*
- 6 Cross out the words in this sentence which are not wanted:
  - (a) For Christmas I would like a puppy, two guinea-pigs, a real gun that shoots, some handkerchiefs, a Shetland pony.
  - (b) In the Christmas holidays we will visit the circus, the pantomime, the dentist, the cinema.
  - (c) For tea Mummy will give us chocolate cake, bread and butter, sausage rolls, ice-cream and jelly.
- 7 Tony, Mary and Jill have 17s. 6d. between them. Mary has 5s. less than Jill, but 3s. 6d. more than Tony. Mary and Jill added together have twice as much as Tony. Christmas is three weeks away; Jill and Tony get 2s. 6d. a week pocket money, but Mary gets 3s. Daddy's shares have dropped sharply. Who will pay for Mummy's Christmas present?





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MEANWHILE, back on the notice board . . .

Haro supplies an academic tailpiece to Parents' Day (see pages 26-7)

### FORM LISTS

1st Quelch Mi  
2nd Dobbs

#### ORDER MARKS

Thwaites - 30  
Billing - 27  
Bertram-Jones - 24  
Dobbs - 15  
Dinney - 9  
Roope-Smythe - 6  
Quelch Ma - 4  
Quelch Mi - 3  
Murchison - 1

SILENT MEALS ARE IMPOSED ON THE FOLLOWING:-  
Thwaites - 1 week  
Dinney -  
Murchison - until further notice

### HEADMASTER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALL BOYS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR REPORT CARDS

We regret to announce that Miss Puckle will be leaving us shortly

We are happy to announce that Miss Pope will be joining us in the near future. G.D.

Any boy found interfering with Miss Puckle's diagrams will be severely dealt with G.D.

Someone has not replaced the School Halma Board. Will any boy who has information as to the

Halma Board  
It appears that the workmen engaged in the Restoration of Big Hall were under the impression that the Halma

The Headmaster & Mrs Drummond have generously loaned their personal Halma Board to

The Halma Group is Disbanded  
Sgnd. G.D.

### GAMES

New Acre having been flooded, all games are suspended for the Summer

Those interested in forming a Halma Group should come to the music room ~~Miss Puckle's room~~ during the eleven o'clock break

HALMA GROUP  
Meetings can no longer be held in the Music Room. Henceforth the group will RV in Big Hall

Miss Puckle has very generously donated her set of diagrams to the School Science Museum. G.D.

### Library

We are very grateful for the gift of the following books from Old Boys

1. Complete set of Sir Walter Scott
2. With Lens & Rod by Maj-Gen Sturrocks.

— o o o —

OWING TO THE PRESENCE OF DRY ROT IN THE BIG HALL ROLL CALL WILL BE HELD IN THE GYM. UNTIL FURTHER

WE REGRET THAT DRY ROT HAS BEEN NOTICED IN THE GYM. ROLL-CALL WILL BE HELD, AS IS CUSTOMARY, IN BIG HALL. ANY BOY FOUND SWINGING ON THE WORKMEN'S SCAFFOLDING WILL BE PUT ON SILENT MEALS

WORLD AFFAIRS  
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# PICK-UPS FOR PARENTS

By PAMELA VANDYKE PRICE

IF it's a matter of handing over a drink with one hand and a post-party infant with the other, then keep the drink simple and generally acceptable—if people are going to drive, this is not the time to demonstrate your punch-packing cocktails. A single superb dry martini or (my own preference) a glass of chilled fino, enable parents to brace themselves. Don't be falsely economical on the quality of either gin or vermouth; cheap in this context nearly always means nasty as well. With sherry, compliment your guests with the best—though it's a true fino (which means truly dry), I've never known even the sweeter-toothed find the beautiful *La Riva Tres Palmas* less than utterly enjoyable. If you want a novelty at "Spanish strength," try a fino called *R.T.*, bottled in Spain, or, for lovers of a fuller style of sherry, there's Bertola's excellent Amontillado "50," also Spanish, in a dumpy bottle.

Should you be bedding down the really young dormitory-wise above stairs and wanting to refresh their parents for an hour, it's becoming increasingly popular to serve a buffet in Scandinavian style, with open sandwiches and salads. Try the Danish *Aalborg Akvavit* with this. You serve it, iced, in tiny glasses and knock your helping back after a mouthful of something. To check the flames that you then feel coming out of your ears, have a long iced lager. Finish with the blackcurrant rum—*Solbaerrom*—iced, with sweets or by itself. Or, if you're just having sandwiches and want a party kind of drink for the festive season, but can't manage Champagne, there are several good sparkling wines, including the Portuguese *Royal Brut*, or a very light, dry sparkling white Burgundy, from the House of Patriarche. You serve it, iced, in tiny glasses and called *Kriter*. It is not very widely

available, but Williams Standring will get it for you, and it costs only about 20s.

Cups and punches tend to bemuse hopeful makers into imagining that sufficient ingredients will create an atmosphere of, say, Haddon Hall in yesteryear. Tell yourself in a sane moment—before the party—that this is not so. The simpler mixtures are usually the best, unless you have professional help, and tampering with the ingredients and proportions of certain traditional recipes is as disastrous as it would be to pop an odd bow on to a little number by Balenciaga. Two cold drinks that are easy and insidiously delicious are, first, the *kalte ente* mixture from Germany; you mix one bottle of sparkling wine into two bottles of still—all well chilled. If you don't want to use Rhine or Moselle, try dry Alsatian or Loire wines for the still ones, with sparkling Vouvray or white Burgundy for the sparklers. Another mixture I myself like is brandy and apple juice, well chilled, with a dash of soda water; use only one-third brandy to two-thirds apple—unless you are able to put guests up for the night. Simpler still is to try one of the Pimms cups—perhaps not No. 1 for a change. The bases are whisky, brandy and rum—after the No. 1 gin. Make them long for people hanging around nibbling; short for child fetchers.

With all those hours of standing and screaming at humanity that the party season involves, it's only sane and right to plan a "sit-down" for oneself and dearest friends. But this is not, I feel, the time for complicated food and thought-provoking wines; you want one or two delicious things to restore faith in the human race. The "simple fare" suggested by the glossier cookery writers would always get me coming at a canter: a huge cheese, gigantic *pâté en croûte*, or a really large jar of caviare. (After all, it's Christmas.) Incidentally, it's worth trying caviare and good Scotch (on the rocks) to which the House of Grant (of "Standfast" fame), once treated me. With the kind of plain meal that's so welcome after much hospitality, I suggest a Steinwein, from Franconia, stalwart enough

to stand up to smoked fish or salami, yet dry and refreshing. O. W. Loeb have one, London-bottled, for under 15s., or estate-bottled wines from about 18s.

For any kind of supper party—stand up or sit down—you want good uncomplicated wines, both red and white, to please all-comers. There are several good blends, but my own recommendation is for a pair from Bordeaux: the white one is light and easy to drink without the extreme dryness that many people think is "right" but which one doesn't always want, and the red is supple and fragrant. The white is called *Marquis de la Rose*; the red *Chevalier de la Rose*; and neither will cost more than about 12s. a bottle.

Both for "afters" and when friends can only come in for dessert, a fine port is traditional with the season. But the great vintages are, I suggest, best kept for more serious dinners. This is the time for the decanter and the nuts and fruit to circulate informally; and the wine should, therefore, be one of the fine old tawnies. Any of the great port houses will have a fine wine for this sort of drinking, but I must here indicate my special pleasure in the old tawny recently offered to me by the head of Skinner & Rook of Nottingham—a revelation of delight. Not cheap of course, but a long-term investment if you're looking for something to intrigue Great-Uncle Charles, whose cellars are already stuffed with '08s, '12s and '27s.

If you want an alternative to port—or a little something for after-dinner droppers-in, or mid-morning weekend visitors, I suggest dry Madeira (plus the cake, of course), cherry brandy (traditional with hipflasks and tweeds) or, ringing the changes on Cognac, a fine Armagnac, which I find is generally liked by both men and women. There are several good brands; my own favourite is one called *Clós des Ducs*. Finally, if those you invite depend on anything except their feet to get home, copy the example of a friend, who sends round the drinks trolley laden with squashes and miniatures—sealed up—for those departing. These are labelled firmly "One for the home."

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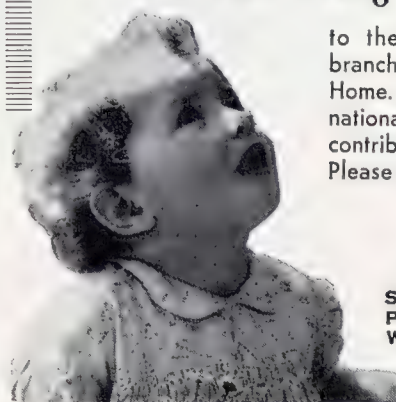
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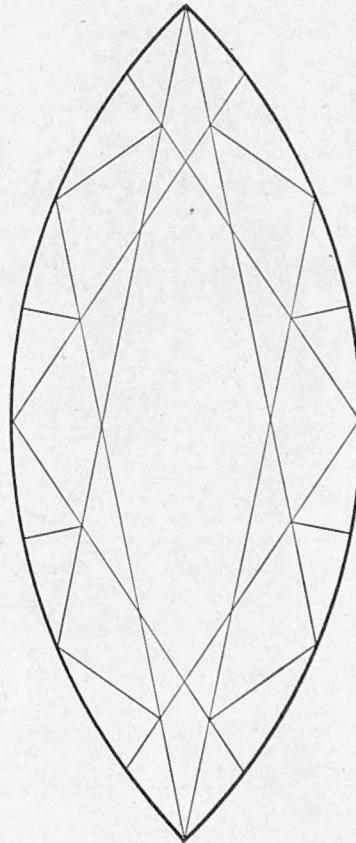
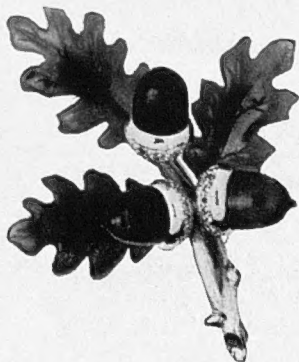
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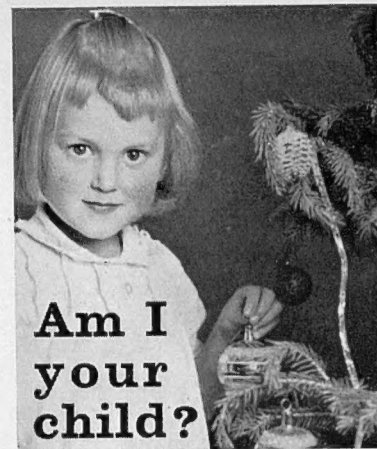
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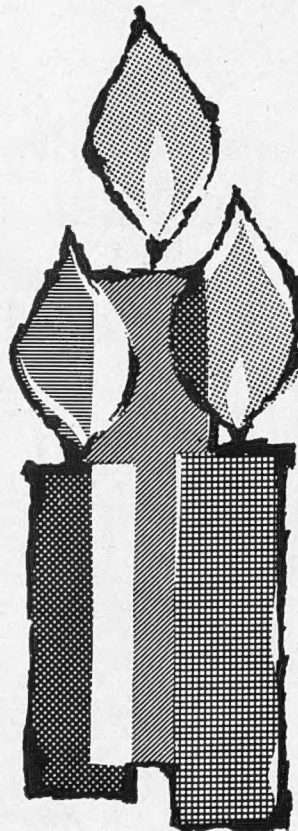
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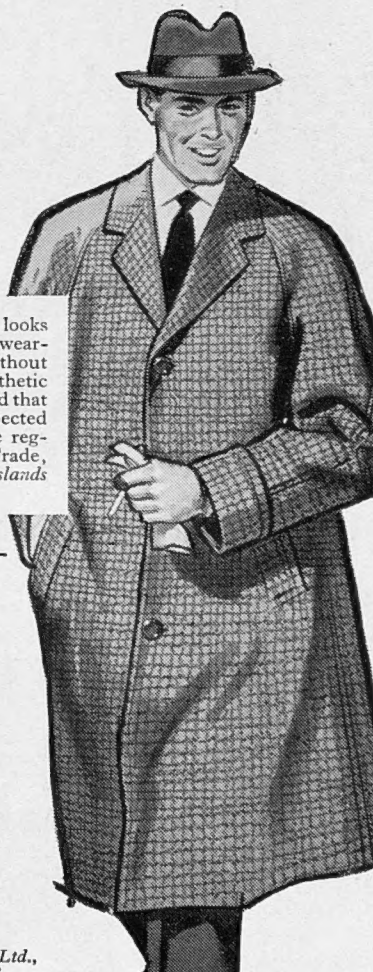
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GOLOW LONDON SW3





## How to blend the best sherry in the world

It's easy. Hop on the next plane to Spain. Head south for Jerez. Settle in comfortably, and stay for a hundred and sixty years. Meantime pick up all the sherry lore you can. You'll find then, if you don't know already, that Harveys Bristol Cream is considered by the experts to be the best sherry ever blended.

But to blend it, even if you learn as much as Harveys know already, you'll need certain venerable and distinguished old sherryries. And it is only fair to warn you that Harveys have earmarked the supplies of these for a very long time to come.



But don't be discouraged. Persevere. With luck, patience, and unlimited funds you may, about the year A.D. 2120, turn out a fairly creditable sherry. Even then it won't be acclaimed overnight as the world's best sherry; the fame of Harveys Bristol Cream has been built up over decades.

In fact, unless you're an incorrigible do-it-yourselfer, it might be easier simply to give in and enjoy the real thing. Harveys Bristol Cream costs 25/6 a bottle. And Harveys are happy to do all the hard work for you.

# HARVEYS BRISTOL CREAM